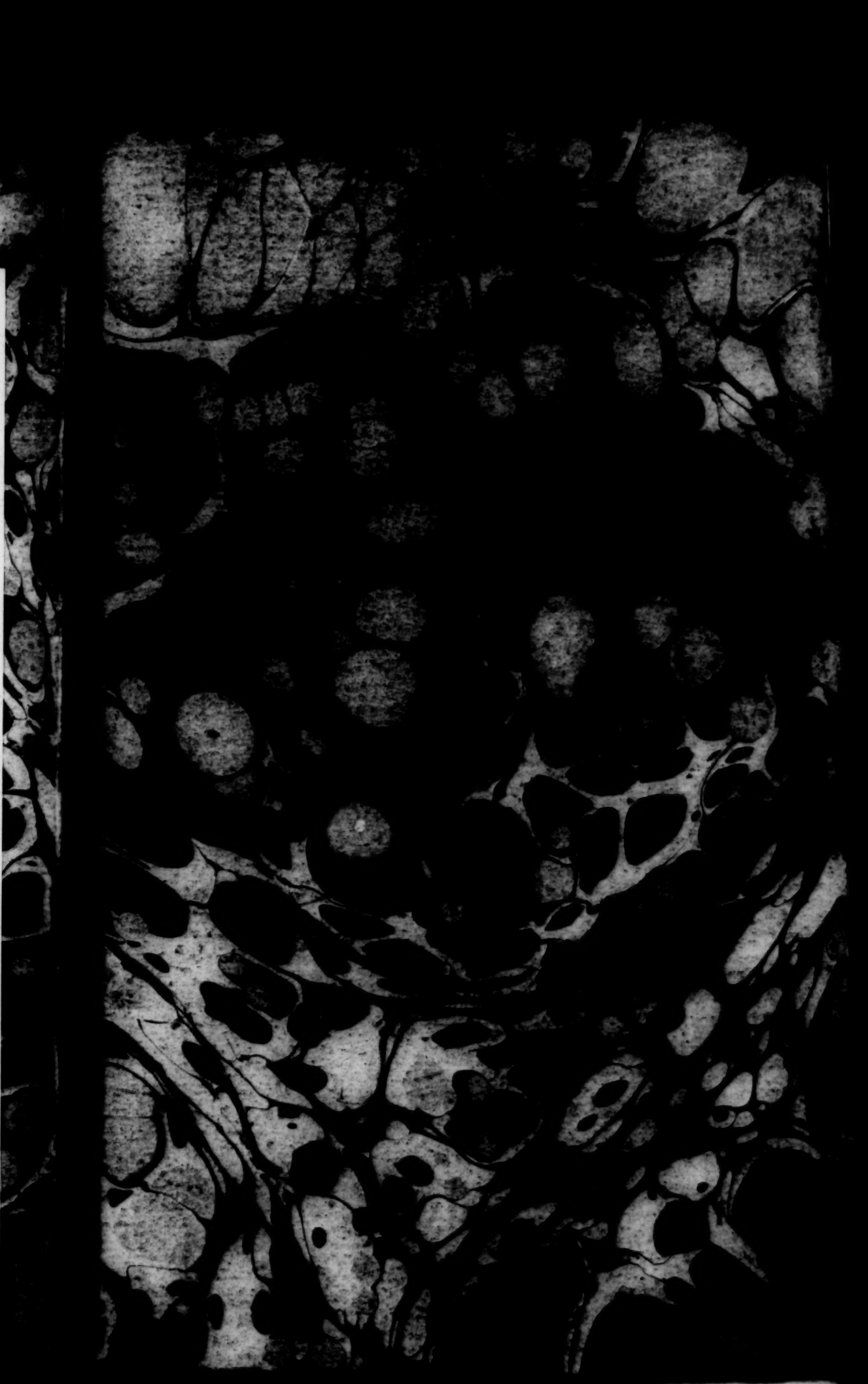


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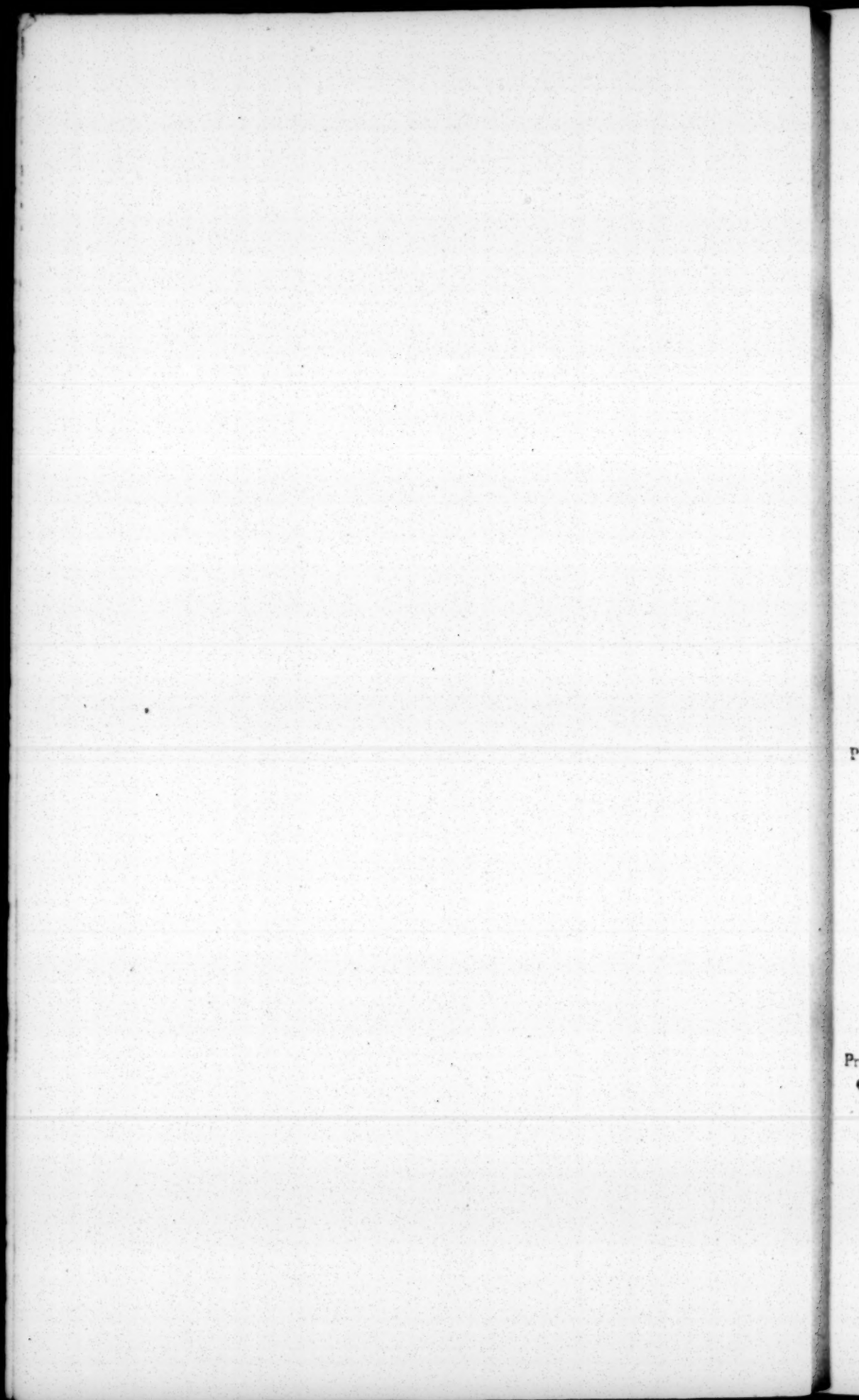
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THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
R E I G N
OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

VOL. II.



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
REIGN
OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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MDCCLXXVII.



THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

BOOK XIV.

AFTER the death of Requesens, who had been prevented from nominating his successor by the violence of his disease, the council of state assumed the reins of government; and as the king hesitated for some time in his choice of a governor, he found it necessary to confirm their authority.

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The government in the hands of the council of state.

THIS revolution afforded great satisfaction to the people of Holland and Zealand; who flattered themselves with hopes, that, now, when the administration was lodged in the hands of their fellow-citizens, the war would not be carried on with the same animosity and ardour as before. At first, however, the council entered heartily into the late governor's designs, and prosecuted, with vigour, the plan of operations which he had left unfinished. And they continued to do so till their attention was called to objects of a still more interesting nature, than the reduction of the maritime provinces.

THE Spanish cavalry had, as already mentioned, begun to mutiny before the death of Requesens. During the siege of Zircsee, the infantry remained obedient to their commanders, partly from being kept in perpetual employment, and partly from the hopes of enriching themselves by the plunder of that city; but being disappointed in these hopes by the articles of the capitulation, and large arrears being due, to the payment of which even the contributions of the people of Zircsee were not applied^a, they flew to arms, deposed their officers, elected others, and a commander in chief from among themselves; and then, having sworn mutual fidelity over the sacred host, they abandoned all their conquests which had cost them so much labour and blood, and passed over to Brabant; intending to take possession of some considerable fortified place, from whence they might make excursions, and plunder the neighbouring towns and villages.

They seize
on Aloft.

THE council of state sent count Mansveldt to appease them; but no offers or promises which the count was empowered to make, could divert them from their design. They hoped, by the rapidity of their march, to have entered Brussels by surprise; but both the inhabitants and garrison were prepared to oppose them. They failed likewise in an attempt on Mechlin. Then leaving Brabant, they turned suddenly towards Aloft in Flanders; and made themselves masters of that town, by climbing over the walls, in the middle of the night, when the citizens were off their guard. They could not have acquired possession of a place more suitable to their design; as it was situated in the midst of a rich and fertile country, and lay at nearly an equal distance from Brussels,

^a Meteren says, that the Walloons laid hold of the money^a and with great dexterity excluded the Spaniards from the town

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fels, Ghent, and Antwerp. They had no sooner displayed the standard of rebellion in Allost, than they were joined by most of the other Spanish troops in the Low Countries; after which they began to exercise every species of violence and outrage, both against the citizens and the inhabitants of the country round.

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THE prince of Orange remained not idle or unconcerned, in this critical conjuncture. He had too much sagacity not to discern, and too much zeal and dexterity not to avail himself of so favourable an opportunity of advancing his designs. By his letters, and emissaries, he endeavoured to rouse the spirit of the people, and to persuade the council, "That now was the time when they might deliver themselves for ever from the tyranny of Spain. By the good providence of God, the government had fallen into their own hands. It ought to be their unalterable purpose, to hold fast the power which they possessed, and to employ it in delivering their fellow-citizens from that intolerable load of misery under which they had so long groaned. The measure of the calamities of the people, and of the iniquities of the Spaniards, was now full. There was nothing worse to be dreaded than they had already suffered; and nothing to deter them from resolving either to expel their rapacious tyrants, or to perish in the glorious attempt."

THESE exhortations, enforced by accounts which were propagated of the enormities committed by the Spanish troops, found an easy admittance into the minds of persons of all ranks. The council of state were no less enflamed than the people; and resolved to publish an edict, declaring the Spaniards to be rebels against the king. Barlaimont, Mansveldt, Viglius, even the Spanish officers of the highest rank, and Rhoda, president

They are
declared re-
bels by the
council.

of the council of tumults, seemed at first inclined to concur with the other counsellors; but perceiving that their resentment was not confined to the mutineers, but extended likewise to all the friends of the Spanish government, they began to alleviate the outrages of the soldiers, and openly opposed the publication of the edict; alleging, that troops which had mutinied on account of not receiving their pay, could not justly be considered as rebels; and that the edict would serve only to exasperate them still more against the people, while the council was not provided with force sufficient to restrain their excesses. But these reasons were held in great contempt by a majority of the council; who, having expelled the dissenting members, accused them of holding correspondence with the mutineers, and threw them into prison. Then having elected the duke d'Arfchot for their president, in the room of Viglius, they published an edict in terms strongly calculated to increase the odium against the Spanish troops; calling on the people to concur with them in driving out that lawless and rapacious crew, who, under the pretext of procuring payment of their arrears, would, if they were not speedily prevented, bring utter ruin upon the Netherlands.

Hostilities
between the
Spaniards
and Flemings.

NOTHING could have been more consonant to the general spirit of the Flemings, than the sentiments contained in this edict. It served as fuel to that flame which was already kindled, and which now burst out with redoubled violence. To give greater weight to the measures which had been already taken, and to those which they intended to pursue, the council called an assembly of the States; and all the provinces, Luxemburg excepted, sent deputies to attend. This assembly had no sooner met than hostilities were begun. The citadels of Antwerp, Ghent, Valenciennes, and Utrecht were in the hands of the Spaniards. Romero

mero commanded in Lieres; and Maestricht was garrisoned by some companies of German infantry. To acquire possession of these important fortresses, and to prevent the Spanish troops from uniting themselves into one body, were the objects upon which the States bestowed their first and principal attention. They were successful in gaining over to their side the regiments of Walloons in the Spanish service; and they raised so great a number of the militia of the country, as, when joined with the Walloons, formed a considerable body of troops.

THE Spaniards, on the other hand, prompted by Rhoda, and animated by the brave and active d'Avila, exerted themselves no less strenuously in counteracting their designs. An officer of the name of Vargas, having drawn together eight hundred horse in the neighbourhood of Maestricht, had advanced as far as Vissenach, in his way to Allost, in hopes of prevailing on the mutineers to act in concert with him. At Vissenach he was met by two thousand foot and six hundred horse, which the States had sent to oppose him. But the Spaniards were not so much inferior in number, as they were superior in military discipline. Vargas supplied his want of infantry by making a company of Burgundians quit their horses. The Flemish troops, though they began the attack with great impetuosity, fell soon into disorder; and the Spaniards broke in upon their ranks, and put them to flight, with considerable slaughter.

VARGAS continued his route to Allost; and was seconded, in his application to the mutineers, by d'Avila and Romero; but neither the importunity of their officers, nor a regard to the honour of their nation, or to their personal safety, could overcome their obstinate resolution to remain in Allost, till they should receive payment of their arrears. From Allost, Vargas led his troops, with

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with the utmost expedition, to Maestricht, which, he was informed, the Germans in garrison there had agreed to deliver to the States. The execution of their design had been retarded by some companies of Spaniards, a part of whom were in possession of one of the gates, and the rest stationed in the town of Vich. This town lies on the east side of the river, and is connected with Maestricht by a bridge over the Maese. Vargas, having transported his troops, and joined his countrymen at Vich, had a sharp engagement with the townsmen upon the bridge; but as they were not supported by the Germans, he soon compelled them to retire. They paid dear for this attempt to assert their liberty. The Germans, instead of acting as their friends, united with the Spaniards, and both together plundered the town without mercy ^b.

The sacking
and plunder
of Antwerp
by the Spaniards,

BUT the memory of the calamities which the people of Maestricht experienced on this occasion, was effaced by those which soon afterwards befell the citizens of Antwerp. The States had laboured in vain to persuade the Spanish garrison in the citadel to deliver it into their hands. They now resolved to compel them; and, with this view, they had brought into the city a numerous body of Walloons and other troops. They had much reason for that solicitude with which they desired to get possession of this important fortress, which, on the one side, communicated with the town, by a spacious esplanade, and on the other, with the adjacent country. The States were not sufficiently aware of the danger to which, from these two circumstances united, the city of Antwerp was exposed. Champigny ^c the governor had endeavoured to rouse their attention to this danger, and had earnestly exhorted them to block up the esplanade

^b Meteren, p. 164. Bentivoglio, p. 178.

^c He was brother to cardinal Granvelle, and was as averse from the Spanish interest as his brother was attached to it.

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esplanade by batteries and trenches; and, at the same time, to order all the troops that could be spared, to encamp without the town, so as to prevent the Spaniards at Allost and other places from entering the citadel. But they wholly neglected the latter part of this advice, and they were too late in beginning to put the former in execution. They believed that the garrison would not venture to sally out upon the town, in which there was so great a number of troops to oppose them; and they flattered themselves with the hopes of being able to compel them to surrender, before they could receive assistance from their countrymen. For this purpose, two strong batteries were planted on the esplanade; while the townsmen were employed either in pushing forward the trenches, or in raising mounds for the security of the town.

THE siege of the castle of Ghent was carried on at the same time, and the States had conceived the most sanguine expectation of success; when the noise of the artillery reached from both places to the mutineers in Allost; and, awakening in them some sparks of their native warlike ferocity, produced a more powerful effect upon their minds, than all the exhortations and entreaties of their commanders.

NAVARESE, their elect or leader, seized dexterously this opportunity which their present disposition afforded him; and, calling them together, exhorted them to reflect upon the folly of suffering the fortresses besieged to fall into the hands of the Flemings. "That artillery," said he, "which is now thundering in our ears, is levelled against us, no less than against the garrisons of Ghent and Antwerp. When the Flemings shall have subdued the rest of our countrymen, can we doubt that they will next turn their arms against us, who are the principal objects of their resentment? Can you imagine that the States

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will

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will then lend a more favourable ear, than at present, to your requests? Believe me, they will ere long extinguish the debt which they owe you, in your blood. Let us march instantly to the relief of the citidal of Antwerp. We shall soon oblige the enemy to raise the siege. We shall, in spite of the townsmen, and the raw troops which they have brought to their assistance, make ourselves masters of the richest city in the world, and take ample revenge for the unworthy treatment we have received."

HE would have proceeded; but was prevented by shouts of applause, and exclamations from every quarter, to arms! To arms! They were now as impatient to leave Allost, as they had formerly been reluctant. On the 3d day of November, and only a few hours before sunset, they began their march; hoping to reach the citadel of Antwerp early next morning, unobserved by the enemy. Having found greater difficulty in passing the Scheld than they expected, they did not arrive till noon; notwithstanding which, being joined by four hundred horse, under Vargas and Romero, who had acted in concert with Navarese, they entered the citadel, without meeting the least opposition. The citizens were no sooner informed of their arrival, than they suspected their design, and were filled with the most dreadful apprehensions. Champigny the governor, whose advice had been so unfortunately disregarded, saw the approaching storm, and did every thing in his power to avert it.

BUT the impetuosity of the mutineers did not leave him time for completing the arrangements which he intended. These men, impelled at once by avarice and revenge, rejected with disdain the invitation given by d'Avila to repose and refresh themselves after their march. With rage and fury in their countenances, they demanded the signal

nal to advance; calling out, that they were determined, before night, either to perish in the conflict, or to fix their quarters in the city. They were in number between two and three thousand, and the garrison, together with the troops brought by Vargas and Romero, amounted nearly to the same number. Navarese the elect led on the mutineers, and the remainder were commanded by Romero. Nothing could exceed the intrepidity with which these two determined bands, vying with each other, attacked the trenches. The citizens displayed at the first onset, great bravery and resolution; but, being unable long to withstand the impetuous attack of the Spaniards, and being galled at the same time by the artillery of the citadel, they at length gave way, and fled with precipitation along the two streets which lead from the parade into the centre of the city. The Spaniards were seconded by their cavalry; which bore down all before them, and followed close upon the rear of the vanquished, till they reached the great square, in the centre of which, stands the Guildhall or Palace. There the fugitives, being joined by some fresh troops, made a halt, and rallied; but they were soon broken a second time, and would have been all cut to pieces, if they had not taken shelter in the palace, and in the houses of the square. From the windows they kept, for some time, a brisk fire upon the enemy, and did considerable execution; but the Spaniards, who were accompanied by the retainers of their camp, set fire to the houses, with hay, straw, and other combustible materials, not sparing even the palace itself; which was esteemed one of the richest and most magnificent in the world. It was quickly reduced to ashes; and of those who had taken refuge in it, some perished in the flames, and some by the sword, in attempting to escape, while others frantic with despair flung themselves headlong from the windows^d.

THE

^d Thuanus.

THE Spaniards then dispersed themselves over the city; overpowering all opposition with irresistible impetuosity. Had their number been sufficient either to murder, or to overtake the prodigious crowds that fled before them, the blood and carnage of that memorable day would have been still more dreadful. Of the citizens near seven thousand perished; while the loss of the Spaniards amounted only to two hundred men. So great is the superiority in battle, of regular discipline, and prompt obedience to command. For though the citizens fought with extraordinary courage, like men whose all was at stake, they acted not in concert, and although they had been marshalled by Champigny, as well as the time would allow, yet, from want of practice, they were soon thrown into confusion; and, from the same cause, they were unable to recover their ranks, or return to the charge.

JUSTICE would oblige us to bestow on the Spanish troops the praise due to the most heroic valour, if, besides the rapacity which impelled them, they had not disfigured the lustre of their victory by exercising a degree of barbarous cruelty, of which, at that period, the Spaniards alone, of all the nations in Europe, seem to have been capable. Antwerp, at the time of this catastrophe, was in the most flourishing condition. Companies of merchants from almost every commercial nation, resided in it, possessing storehouses and factories filled with the most precious commodities. Great numbers of the citizens too were the wealthiest in Europe. Their magnificent houses were adorned with the most costly furniture; and their shops and warehouses stored with prodigious quantities of gold and silver stuffs, and all other kinds of valuable effects, collected from every corner of the globe. Upon these the Spaniards seized, without any discrimination of the owners, and without considering

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sidering whether the persons whom they pillaged, were friends or enemies. The plunder that lay open and unconcealed was immense; but was far from being sufficient to satiate the avarice of the Spaniards. They exercised the most unrelenting cruelty upon all whom they suspected to have concealed their treasures; and nothing was to be heard in the city, but either the shrieks and groans of the sufferers, or the lamentations of those whom they compelled to witness the torments of their husbands, wives, or children. Contemporary historians have described some of the several species of torture which they inflicted; but the reader's modesty would be offended, and his humanity shocked by the recital^d.

IN this manner were these men, for three days and nights, employed in plundering and butchering by turns, a people who were subjects of the same prince as themselves, and from whom (whatever ground of complaint they might pretend against the council of State) they had never received the smallest injury, or provocation. Nor does it appear that their officers interposed their authority, to moderate their excesses, till the soldiers, exhausted with fatigue, were about to give over of themselves.

THE money in specie which was extorted, amounted at least to eight millions of guilders, besides a prodigious quantity of gold and silver, in plate, stuffs, and furniture, which the owners were not able to redeem. The loss which the people of Antwerp sustained by the burning of so many buildings, was not less than what they suffered by the rapacity of the soldiers. The most beautiful part of the city was burnt to the ground; and great numbers of shops and warehouses, containing the richest goods, were consumed to ashes^e.

WHILST

^d Thuanus and Meteren. ^e Meteren, p. 164. Thuanus, tom. iii. p. 471. Bentivoglio, p. 178.

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The States
receive assist-
ance from
the Prince of
Orange.

WHILST the barbarity exercised against the inhabitants of Antwerp, excited sentiments of compassion towards the unhappy sufferers, it greatly augmented that abhorrence which the Flemings already entertained towards the Spaniards, and made them more solicitous than ever to deliver themselves from a yoke which was now become intolerable. But the great superiority which the Spanish troops discovered on every occasion over the raw undisciplined forces of the States, created much anxiety, with regard to the success of their endeavours. The council of state perceived the necessity of having recourse to foreign aid; and they willingly accepted an offer, which was made them at this juncture by the prince of Orange, of some cannon, ammunition, and troops, with which they pushed forward the siege of the citadel of Ghent, and soon obliged the garrison to capitulate.

THIS seasonable assistance contributed not a little to advance the prince's views. Immediately after the death of Roquesens, he had projected a scheme of uniting all the provinces, and had exerted himself with great activity and address, in carrying it into execution. The States entered readily into his ideas. Deputies were appointed, and invested with proper powers, by the several provinces; and in the congress, which was held at Ghent, a treaty of confederacy was concluded, under which all the provinces, except Luxemburg, were comprehended.

The confederacy of
Ghent.

November
8th, 1576.

IN this confederacy, so well known in the history of the Netherlands by the name of the Pacification of Ghent, it was agreed between the Catholic provinces on the one hand, and those of Holland and Zealand, with the prince of Orange, on the other, that there should subsist between them, an inviolable alliance, peace, and friendship; that all past injuries should be buried in oblivion; that all prisoners,

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prisoners, and in particular the count de Bossut, should be set at liberty without ransom; that the contracting parties should, to the utmost of their power assist each other in expelling the Spaniards from the Netherlands; that as soon as the provinces should be delivered from these bloody oppressors, and tranquillity established, a general assembly should be held of the States of all the provinces, for redressing grievances, reforming abuses, and restoring the constitution to its primæval state; that the prince of Orange should remain high admiral and governor of the maritime provinces; and that he, and all others, whose property had been confiscated, should be reinstated in their possessions and dignities; that the decrees of the duke of Alva, relative to the tumults and heresy, should be abolished; but that in the Catholic provinces, only the Roman Catholic religion should be exercised; while in those of Holland and Zealand, all matters, whether civil or religious, should remain on their present footing, till a general assembly of all the States should be held^f.

THE deputies who were now convened, whom the historians call likewise by the name of the States, entered immediately upon the execution of the articles of this confederacy, by transporting to the frontier of France such of the Spaniards as had been taken prisoners in the citadel of Ghent: and they had begun to make preparations to dislodge them from other places, when they were informed that Don John of Austria, whom Philip had made choice of for governor, had arrived in the province of Luxemburg. In some respects, Don John was admirably qualified for this new station, to which his brother had appointed him. His affable and insinuating manners were fitted to conciliate

Arrival of
Don John of
Austria.

^f Meteren, p. 169. Bentivoglio, l. 9. sub fine. Thuanus, l. 62. sect. 13.

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ciliate the affections of the people whom he was sent to govern; and his military accomplishments qualified him to pursue the war with vigour, against the revolted provinces. But in the critical situation into which the late enormities of the Spaniards had brought the Netherlands, other talents besides these were requisite; such as prudence, patience, and self-command, together with skill and dexterity in managing the passions, and the prejudices of men; qualifications which Don John possessed not in any considerable degree.

His imprudence.

HIS conduct upon his first arrival was ill calculated to allay those suspicions which the Flemings entertained of the king's design in sending him to the Netherlands. Having stopt at Luxemburg, he wrote letters to the council and the States, in which he informed them, that he would not come to Brussels, the usual residence of their governors, unless hostages were given him for their peaceable behaviour, a guard appointed for the security of his person, and the same unlimited command of the fleet and army conferred upon him, which the preceding governors had enjoyed. He lamented the outrages which had been committed by the Spanish troops; and promised, that, if the States and people should maintain their obedience to the king, and their profession of the catholic faith, the injuries which they had sustained, should not pass unpunished. But he added, that if they failed in either of these respects, they should, in that event, find him no less prepared for war, than he was inclined to peace.

The States apply for advice to the Prince of Orange.

THE States and council were ignorant, till they received these letters, of the light in which their late conduct was considered by the court of Spain. They believed that, as the steps which they had taken were necessary for the preservation of the people,

people, it was impossible they could be offensive to the king; and they were extremely surprised, thus to meet, not only with distrust, but even threats, and a defiance, where they were conscious of having merited approbation and applause. They trembled therefore at the thoughts of putting themselves in the power of the new governor, and were greatly at a loss to determine what answer they should return to his demands. On this occasion, they had recourse to the Prince of Orange for advice. And William readily embraced the opportunity, which was thus presented to him, of confirming his countrymen in those suspicions to which the governor's conduct had given rise.

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“As it was but too manifest,” he said, “from the strain of Dohn John’s letter, that he intended to tread in the footsteps of his predecessors, the States and council had much need to exert all their firmness, prudence, and circumspection. They ought seriously to consider of the important charge with which they were intrusted; and to remember, that, upon their present conduct it depended, whether they, and their wives, and children, and fellow citizens, should for the future enjoy those rights which belonged to them as natives of the Low Countries, or should be again exposed to the lawless tyranny of the Spaniards. They ought to exercise with vigour the power which they possessed, and resolutely reject all terms of agreement with the governor, by which the fundamental laws of the State might be brought into danger, or their own authority abridged. Enter not, said he, into any accommodation with him, till the Spaniards, and all other foreign troops be actually dismissed. Trust not to any soothing promises which he may give you, of dismissing them at a more convenient season. Remember how the king himself, when he went to Spain, assured you, that the troops which he then left behind him, should, in three months afterwards,

His advice.
Dated November
30th, 1576.

afterwards, be withdrawn, and yet they were suffered to remain for more than a year and a half; and would, notwithstanding your solicitations, have still remained, if the calamity which befell his army for him in Africa, had not made it necessary to remove them. Let no consideration persuade you to listen to Don John's request of being invested with the unlimited command of your forces. By granting this, you will furnish him with weapons against yourselves. Nothing can express his distrust more strongly, than his unprecedented requisitions of hostages, and a guard for the security of his person. If you comply with these demands, you will enable him to annihilate your authority, and to trample under foot your most sacred rights and laws. It is impossible to believe that one who discovers so much solicitude to strip you of your power, can seriously intend your welfare. Is it not more reasonable that the governor should trust the States, than that the States should lay themselves at the mercy of the governor? Such demands were never made, even by your princes themselves; whose practice always was to come unarmed to your assemblies, and to take an oath to maintain your privileges, before they received from you any promise of obedience. Consent not to put yourselves under the power of John of Austria, upon easier terms than have been ever insisted upon with your native princes. Require him, previously to his admission, to interpose his authority for the immediate departure of the Spanish troops; and solemnly to engage to govern the State according to its fundamental laws^h. To these conditions, your late fatal experience will justify you, if you add, that you shall have the power of assembling yourselves twice, or even thrice a year, if you shall judge it to be expedient; that the citadels shall be raised

^h Here the prince mentions the particular privileges to which he alludes, and the times when they were obtained. Meteren, p. 175.

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raised to the ground ; that the right of appointing the governors and magistrates shall be vested in you ; and that without your consent, no military force shall be levied, and no garrisons stationed in the towns or forts. At present, it little imports you to consider whether or not this conduct will give offence to the king, for it is mere delusion, if you flatter yourselves that you have not already offended him. Promises, soothing speeches, and professions of affection on his part, will not be wanting ; but you will discover the last degree of weakness, if, after what you have experienced for several years past, you are not sensible, that nothing now remains for you, but either miserably to bend under the yoke, from which you have so happily escaped, or to employ with vigour and fortitude the means with which Providence has furnished you ; and which, I doubt not, may yet prove effectual for your security, provided you maintain harmony and concord among yourselves ¹."

THIS letter, in some measure, produced the desired effect. It put to silence all those who were for receiving Don John on his own terms ; and the States, more suspicious than ever of his design, resolved to insist upon the dismissal of the troops, and the confirmation of the pacification of Ghent, as conditions, without which they would never agree to acknowledge his authority. And that they might not be found unprepared, in case of his refusal, they gave orders for making new levies ; drew together an army at Wavre, between Brussels and Namur ; and dispatched ambassadors to solicit assistance from foreign courts.

The States
apply for aid
to foreign
powers.

IN Germany, where they were powerfully seconded in their applications by the prince of Orange, they engaged in their interest, John Casimire, count palatine of the Rhine. In France they did not confine their application to the Calvinists,

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vinists,

¹ Meteren, p. 175, 176. Bentivoglio, lib. ix. ab initio. Thuanus, l. lxii. sect. 15.

vinists, but likewise prevailed upon the duke of Anjou, the king's brother, to espouse their cause, by setting before him the prospect of an establishment in the Low Countries, more suitable to his rank than he could expect to obtain in his brother's dominions. From the queen of England, their envoy met with the most gracious reception. It was matter of the highest satisfaction to this sagacious princess, to see her inveterate enemy thus embroiled with his Flemish subjects; but, as she was still desirous to avoid an open rupture with Philip, she chose to assist them with money rather than with troops, and gave them 40,000 pounds, with a promise of continuing her favour, on condition (which she added in order to save appearances) that they should adhere to the pacification of Ghent, and not throw off their allegiance to their legal sovereign.

Their negotiation with Don John.

WHILE the States were making these preparations to vindicate their rights by force of arms, they sincerely desired to attain their end, by negotiation with the governor. For they had too long groaned under the calamities of war, not to wish most earnestly for peace, provided that blessing could be secured, without making a sacrifice of their liberties. Don John, on the other hand, discovered an extreme reluctance to comply with the conditions which they required of him; but he endeavoured to dissemble his sentiments, and attempted, by fair speeches, to cajole and deceive them. Still, however, he continued to shew his diffidence, by insisting upon having a numerous guard for his person; and by refusing his consent to the departure of the Spaniards, unless the States should at the same time dismiss all the foreign troops in their service, and give hostages, to remain in the hands of a neutral power, till their engagements should be fulfilled.

THE States, whose jealousy was kept alive by the repeated warnings of the prince of Orange, easily

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easily penetrated into Don John's designs; and they resolved, if possible, to convince him, by one decisive step, that it was in vain for him to expect they would ever depart from the terms proposed. In their assembly at Brussels, on the 5th of January, 1577, they drew up a new deed of union, in which they engaged in the most solemn manner, to maintain inviolably for ever the pacification of Ghent; to spare neither their goods, their persons, nor their lives, in order to fulfil it; and to regard as perjured traitors, all those who, participating in the present union, should by word, deed, or counsel, counteract it. A copy of this deed, subscribed by the governor and deputies of all the towns and provinces, by the nobility, prelates, and other dignified ecclesiastics; and by the members of tribunals, councils, colleges, and chapters, together with a solemn ratification of it by the council, was sent by the States to Don John, as their final answer to his demands ^k.

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THIS measure contributed not a little to promote the end proposed. It gave Don John a proof of firmness, on the part of the States, which he little expected, and shewed him the necessity of either agreeing to the conditions which they so earnestly required, or of resolving instantly to have recourse to arms. Inflamed by ambition and the love of war, he would not have hesitated a moment what part to act, had not his instructions from the king required that he should avoid coming to an open rupture with the Catholic provinces. He considered likewise, that the States had got the start of him, and were already well prepared to repel force by force. Nor was he ignorant of the encouragement which they had received, to hope for succour from the neighbouring powers; or of the danger to which great numbers of the Spanish troops, surrounded by their enemies, were exposed, of being reduced by famine. Influenced by these considerations, and trusting, that ere long, after quieting their suspicions, opportunities would

Their agreement with him.

C 2

offer

^k Meteren, p. 179.

March 12th.

offer of depriving the States by degrees of that power of which they were at present so tenacious, he entered into a negociation with their deputies at Marche en Famine, a city in Luxemburg; and after many obstructions and difficulties, concluded a treaty with them, which they fondly termed the perpetual edict.

IN this treaty he engaged, that all the foreign troops in the service of Spain should leave the Netherlands, and never return thither without the consent of the States; that the Spaniards and Italians should depart within the space of forty days, and the Germans, immediately after receiving satisfaction with regard to their arrears; and that all the cities and forts possessed by these troops should, as soon as they were relinquished, be delivered to the States, together with the stores of ammunition, arms, and provisions. He ratified the pacification of Ghent. He consented that all prisoners detained on account of the late disturbances, should immediately be set at liberty, except the count of Buren¹. And he promised that diligent enquiry should be made, concerning the outrages lately committed by the troops; that justice should be executed against the guilty, and a reasonable compensation made to the sufferers, either in the Netherlands, or in Spain, according as the king should be pleased to determine.

THE States, on the other hand, engaged to preserve inviolable their allegiance to the king; to maintain the profession of the Roman Catholic faith throughout all the provinces; to receive Don John as governor general of the Netherlands, and immediately to furnish him with 600,000 florins, for the payment of the Italian and Spanish troops, in order to prevail on them the more easily to depart for Spain or Italy.

The States
of Holland
refuse to
concur.

As soon as this treaty was concluded, ambassadors were dispatched by the Catholic States, who alone were concerned in it, to the prince of Orange,

¹ Son of the prince of Orange.

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Orange, and the States of Holland and Zealand, to desire their concurrence. It might easily have been foreseen, that this application could not be attended with success. For although the maritime provinces had consented, in the pacification of Ghent, to submit the question of religion to the decision of a general assembly, to be held after the departure of the Spaniards; yet in that assembly they knew that they would have leisure to employ all their influence in behalf of their religion, and to offer such reasons against proscribing it, as they hoped would prove a sufficient counterpoise to the religious zeal of the popish States. Without this expectation it can hardly be supposed, that Protestants, whose sincerity in their profession was so unquestionable, would ever have agreed to leave to others the determination of a matter in which they were so deeply interested: and therefore it is not surprising, that they declined acceding to the treaty now presented to them, in which this important point had, without obtaining their consent, been so hastily decided. But least they should alarm the bigotry of the Catholic provinces, they took no notice in their answer, of this, which was their principal objection. They began with saying, that they could not enough praise that generous zeal which the States had displayed, in delivering their country from the tyranny of the Spaniards; and they rejoiced to find that they still persisted in their resolution of adhering to the pacification of Ghent. But after considering attentively the treaty which had been transmitted to them, they were sorry to observe, that it was extremely ill calculated to answer the laudable intentions of the States. For besides several other objections of great weight, there was no proper provision made, in this treaty, for the regular calling of assemblies: in a convention, held on purpose to restore and secure their rights, an open infraction of them was ratified, by their consenting to the unjust detention of the count of Buren; the States had failed in the respect and gratitude

which.

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which they owed to the queen of England and the duke of Anjou; and certain articles of the treaty were derogatory to the honour of the Netherlands; particularly that article, by which, instead of insisting upon a restitution of those invaluable effects, of which the Spaniards had plundered the inhabitants, they had promised money to those men, notwithstanding their having been solemnly declared traitors and rebels by the States themselves, and by the council of state, when clothed with the authority of the king.

Departure
of the Italian
and Spanish
troops.

THE Catholics could not but be sensible of the strength of these objections. Their impatience to be delivered from the Spanish troops, and their eager desire of peace, had betrayed them into that precipitation of which they had been guilty. They could not avail themselves now of the superior penetration of the prince of Orange. The treaty was already concluded, and nothing remained for them, but to watch the governor's motions with an attentive eye, till the troops were removed to such a distance, that they could not easily be recalled. Don John was at great pains to dispel their suspicions. For that purpose, he employed all his influence to persuade the Spaniards to depart; and he at length prevailed, though not till he had distributed among them the money which he had received from the States. This brave, but ferocious, and savage band then set out upon their march for Italy, like an army in triumph; laden with the spoils of their fellow-subjects, and without compunction for the rapacity and violence which they had exercised ^m.

Don John's
admission to
the govern-
ment.

THEIR departure diffused universal joy throughout the Netherlands, and the people indulged the flattering hope, that the king, having been at last touched with their calamities, had resolved to treat them with greater lenity and moderation than they had experienced since the beginning

^m Thuanus, lib. lxiv. sect. 6.

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ginning of his reign. Their satisfaction was heightened by the popular character of the governor, who was in the prime of life; elegant and graceful in his person and deportment; lively, facetious and affable, and who gained exceedingly from the comparison which men naturally formed of his insinuating manners, with the reserve and austerity of the king. He was received in Brussels with such marks of respect as had never been shewn to any former governor; and persons of all ranks flattered themselves with the prospect of a just and mild administration.

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THEY did not long enjoy this alluring prospect. Although Philip himself had ratified the perpetual edict, and Don John had, before his admission to the regency, sworn in the most solemn manner, to observe it, it soon appeared that nothing was farther from the intentions of either. The limitations which that edict imposed upon the sovereign's authority, were utterly repugnant to Philip's temper, as well as to the plan which he had formed for the government of the Netherlands; nor would he ever have empowered his brother to make so many concessions to the States, as the perpetual edict, or pacification of Ghent, contained, but in order more effectually to strip them afterwards of that very power which he now consented they should enjoy. But Don John was, from his natural impetuosity, incapable of executing this scheme, which required a much higher degree of circumspection and experience, as well as patience and dissimulation, than he possessed. His court was perpetually filled with Spaniards, and other foreigners, who had rendered themselves obnoxious to the natives; nor were any of the Flemings admitted into his confidence, but such as had shewn themselves devoted to the Spanish interest; while those who had discovered an attachment to the liberty of their country, were kept at a distance, and treated with indifference or contempt.

His impolitic
conduct.

tempt. This circumstance contributed not a little to revive that jealousy of his designs, which he had been so solicitous to allay. But the States were still more alarmed, when he made them the following proposals: that they should not any longer withhold from him the authority which his predecessors had enjoyed, but allow him to act as captain-general, as well as governor of the provinces: that they should empower him, without waiting for the determination of the general assembly of the States, to execute the two articles of the late treaty, which related to the obedience due to the king, and the re-establishment of the Catholic religion: and that, if the prince of Orange would not immediately agree to accede to the perpetual edict, the States should break off all correspondence with him, and reduce him and the maritime provinces to obedience, by force of arms. With these proposals the States refused to comply, but expressed their refusal in the softest terms; and without taking notice of his demand, to be allowed to act as captain-general, they represented to him that, by the pacification of Ghent, both he and they were bound to wait for the meeting of the general assembly of the States; to whose decision the prince of Orange, and the States of Holland and Zealand, had engaged to submit.

His duplicity DON JOHN perceiving that he was not likely to persuade them, grew more impatient than ever under his present restraints, and resolved now to employ either force or fraud, as opportunities should offer. The States could not fully penetrate his design, but they perceived how much he was dissatisfied with his situation, and what difficulty they would find to obtain the fulfilment of his engagements in the perpetual edict. This served to render them more than ever solicitous for the departure of the German troops, which, it had been agreed, should remain in the Netherlands, till they received payment of their arrears. These arrears amounted to a very great sum, which the States

States were utterly unable to raise at the present juncture. But, having raised a part of it, they made an offer of that to the Germans, and desired they would accept of goods and security for the rest. In order to make a further trial of Don John's sincerity, they intreated him to employ his influence, to procure their consent. Don John readily agreed to his request; and declared that, if the Germans should refuse to comply, he would, at the hazard of his life, compel them. Having summoned their commanders to meet him at Mechlin, he went thither, as if on purpose to persuade them; but in reality to inflame their minds against the States, and to exhort them to remain in the Netherlands, in the service of the king. Having had the success which he desired with some of the principal officers, and judging it necessary now to redouble his hypocrisy with the States, he wrote to them, lamenting that a much greater sum was necessary to satisfy the German troops, than could be procured in the Low Countries; and offering to send his secretary Escovedo to represent their situation to the king. This artifice was not altogether without effect. The States could not believe that Don John was capable of so great deceit, as he was now practising against them. They agreed to his proposal, and, as an expression of their gratitude, they settled a pension of 2000 ducats on Escovedo, who set out immediately for Spain; but with a design extremely different from that which was pretended.

DON JOHN in the mean time carried on his intrigues with the German officers, and hoped soon, by their means, to get possession of the fortified towns in which they lay. But before any of the plans which he had formed with this view were put in execution, he judged it necessary to withdraw from Brussels, and, if possible, to make himself master of some place of strength near the frontier, where he might remain in safety till he should find himself

He seizes on the castle of Namur.

himself in a condition to take the field. Of all the frontier towns, Namur appeared the fittest for his purpose; being conveniently situated for the reception of the troops, to which he expected the king would soon give orders to return from Italy. It happened that Margaret de Valois, queen of Navarre, intended at this time to pass through Namur in her way to Spa. On pretence of paying his respects to Margaret, he left Brussels, and arrived in Namur, with a great number of the nobility and others, who were favourable to his design. But as the governor of the castle was a person of strict fidelity, Don John was obliged, in order to accomplish his aim, to have recourse to the following stratagem. Feigning to set out in the morning for the chace, he took his way by the castle; where having stopt, and enquiring for the governor, he pretended a curiosity to see the fortifications of the place. The governor, flattered with this visit, and suspecting nothing hostile from men who seemed equipped only for hunting, readily admitted, not only Don John himself, but his attendants; some of whom having arms concealed under their apparel, immediately seized upon the gateⁿ.

July 24th.

JOHN having thus secured possession of the castle, the town was, by the assistance of count Barlaimont, governor of the province, soon subjected to his authority. He observed with triumph, that the day on which this event happened, was the first day of his regency. It might with greater propriety have been said, that it was the first of those calamities which pursued him to the grave.

AFTER such an open violation of his faith, there could be little room for any future negotiation with the States. Yet, in a letter which he wrote to them on this occasion, he regretted that the plots which had been laid to deprive him of his life

ⁿ Bentivoglio, lib. x. p. 192. 195. Meteren, p. 185.

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life or liberty, had obliged him to have recourse to so hostile an expedient: and he affirmed, that he was still ready to observe the conditions of the perpetual edict; but declared that he would not quit his present situation, till they should make provision for the security of his person, against the machinations of his enemies.

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THE States and council were greatly astonished, when they received intelligence of this event. They had wished for nothing so much as to preserve the provinces from being plunged afresh into the calamities of war. They considered that some of the principal cities in Brabant were in the hands of the Germans. They knew not what part these troops might act, if hostilities with the governor should take place; and they could not imagine that he would have ventured on so manifest a breach of the perpetual edict, without the prospect of some powerful support. They immediately dispatched ambassadors to remonstrate with him on the nature and consequences of his conduct, and to request him to return to Brussels. They promised to make the most serious enquiry into the machinations of which he complained, desired that he would name the persons guilty, and assured him, that nothing should be wanting on their part to provide, in the most satisfactory manner, for the security of his person.

OF the reality of these machinations he could produce no other evidence, but some anonymous letters, which, he said, had been transmitted to him. But as no person was named in these letters, and the authors of them were utterly unknown, all men believed them to be a forgery of his own, or of his courtiers, designed to serve as a pretext for his present treachery.

THE answer which he made to the States shewed clearly, that, in the step which he had taken, he had been influenced by a motive very different from

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from that which he pretended—That the States should put him in full possession of the authority, which the preceding governors had exercised; that they should give him the entire command of the army; break off all communication with the prince of Orange, and the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, and compel them to accede to the perpetual edict. These were some of the conditions, to which if they did not agree, he acquainted them, that he was unalterably determined not to return. The States represented the inconsistency between the former of these demands, and the perpetual edict; and reminded him of the utter impossibility, under which they found themselves, of complying with the latter, without violating their faith, which they had pledged, in the pacification of Ghent, to the maritime provinces. He still persisted in his resolution; and the States were equally inflexible.

Discovery of
his designs.

THEY were confirmed in their purpose, by some letters writ by Don John and Escovedo to the king, and Antonio Perez his secretary, which were intercepted in Gascony by the king of Navarre, and sent by him to the prince of Orange, who transmitted them to the States. In these letters, the necessity of the speedy return of the Italian and Spanish troops were urged with the utmost earnestness and importunity. The diseases of the Netherlands, said Don John, admit of no other cure, but lopping off the parts affected: and, to the same purpose, Escovedo observed, That fire, and the shedding of blood, were the only means by which the disorders that prevailed could be remedied. For no man here, said he, whether among the nobility or people, performs the duty that he owes either to God or the king. Opinions the most abominable universally prevail; and every man lives as he lists, without law or rule. To which he added, That if the king did not send the necessary troops and money soon, he was afraid that Don John, who could not endure his present situation,

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ation, would quit the Netherlands, and try his fortune elsewhere.

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WHILE these letters served to alienate the Flemings more than ever from Don John, they raised to the greatest height their admiration of the penetration and sagacity of the prince of Orange, who had given them early warning of the governor's duplicity, and whose predictions were now so remarkably fulfilled. They entered with greater ardour than ever into his views, and in conformity with his advice, they resolved to lose no more time in negotiating, but without delay to put the provinces into a posture of defence, before the return of the Spanish forces. Whilst their levies, and other military preparations, were going on, they laboured with great solicitude to persuade the Germans to deliver up the towns in their possession. Their success was in some measure retarded by the governor's intrigues with the officers; but the States, having at this time greater facility than Don John, in employing either money or force, according as the one or the other was most likely to prove effectual, had greater influence with the soldiers; who not only refused to listen to their officers, but put some of them under arrest, and gave them up to the States, together with the towns and citadels. In this manner the States recovered Bergen-op-zoom, Tolen, Breda, Boisle-duc, and several other places; and they had the good fortune likewise to defeat a body of Germans, in the governor's interest, who were upon their march to surprise the citadel of Antwerp. After which, prompted partly by the apprehensions which this attempt, though unsuccessful, had excited, and partly by the remembrance of the many calamities which the citadels, in other places as well as Antwerp, had occasioned to the inhabitants, they resolved to demolish these fortresses; and gave orders for this purpose, which were executed by the people with inexpressible alacrity.

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get a number
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The States
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DON

* Meteren, p. 187. Bentiveoglio, tom. ii. p. 212.

DON JOHN, in the mean time, endeavoured to make himself master of some places in the neighbourhood of Namur; and he succeeded in his attempts upon Marienburg and Charlemont. But, being forsaken by the duke of Arschot, and almost all the other nobility who had attended him to Namur; and perceiving that the States were much farther advanced than himself in their military preparations, he sent them word that he had solicited the king for liberty to leave the Netherlands; and would immediately retire to Luxemburg, to wait the issue of his application, provided the States would agree to desist from hostilities till the king's instructions should arrive. But the States, suspecting from their former experience that he intended nothing by this proposal but to render them more remiss in their preparations, gave him for answer, that before they would listen to any terms of accommodation, he must deliver up the city and castle of Namur. To this Don John refused to consent; and thus the negotiation was broken off, and all hopes of terminating the dispute amicably were extinguished.

The States
invite the
prince of
Orange to
reside at
Brussels.

THE States, considering war now as unavoidable, resolved to invite the prince of Orange to reside at Brussels; and accordingly five of their number were appointed to carry him an invitation, couched in terms so flattering and respectful, and so expressive at the same time of their gratitude for his former services, that it was impossible he could hesitate to comply with their request. Having obtained the consent of the States of Holland and Zeeland, he went first to Breda, and thence to Antwerp and Brussels. His reception in the places through which he passed, was such as might be expected from a people, by whom he was held in the highest respect and veneration. Ardent to behold him, after an absence of several years, during which he had undergone so many labours, and been exposed to so many dangers in their service, they poured out in multitudes, to the distance of several miles, to meet him. In his passage from
Antwerp

His recep-
tion.

Antwerp to Bruffels, one side of the canal was lined by the inhabitants of the former of these places, and the other, by those of the latter ; while the banks resounded with the joyful shouts of a grateful people, who saluted him with the glorious appellations of the Father of his Country, and the Guardian of its Liberty and Laws. Nor were these demonstrations of joy confined to the vulgar, who are always sincere, but often precipitate and inconstant in their applauses ; persons of all ranks vied with each other in testifying their respect and gratitude ; and immediately after his arrival, the States of Brabant and the States-general concurred in electing him governor of the province of Brabant¹ ; a dignity which had been hitherto bestowed only on the viceroys, or governors-general of the Netherlands.

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By his wisdom and moderation, as well as by his vigilance and industry, William fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of his countrymen. But, notwithstanding his address and prudence, and skill in managing the minds of men ; qualifications which he possessed in the most eminent degree ; he could not preserve that unanimity among the Flemings, which it was of so much consequence for them, in the present juncture, to maintain. At no period had they enjoyed so fair a prospect of securing their liberty on a firm and permanent foundation. Besides the advantage of having a person of so great experience and abilities to guide their counsels, the Spanish troops were entirely withdrawn ; the king's finances were greatly exhausted with the wars in which he had been continually engaged ; almost all the fortified places were in the hands of the States ; and the people were animated universally with the most violent abhorrence of the Spanish government. But the States were prevented from improving the opportunity which this fortunate concurrence of circumstances afforded them, by a spirit of division
and

The promising condition
of the Netherlands.

¹ Vide Hist. Metallique, tom. i. p. 235.

and animosity, which sprung up, partly from the jealousies of the nobility, and partly from the intemperate religious zeal and bigotry of the people.

Sources of
animosity
and discord.

PHILIP de Croy duke of Arschot, the marquis of Havrée his brother, the count de Lalain, and several others of the catholic nobility, had, since the death of Requesens, distinguished themselves as strenuous assertors of the liberties of their country. They had promoted with all their influence the pacification of Ghent, and had concurred with their countrymen in the invitation given to the prince of Orange to reside at Brussels. But when they reflected upon the extraordinary marks of attachment which William had received, and saw him vested with an authority and dignity in Brabant, which only the sovereign or his viceroys had hitherto enjoyed; above all, when they contemplated his great abilities and experience in the conduct of affairs; they foresaw that they must content themselves with acting a subordinate part in the government, and that the States would, in every branch of administration, be directed by the prince of Orange, who must therefore reap the glory of whatever should be achieved, and, without the name of sovereign, exercise a supreme and sovereign authority. Stung with envy, and desirous to conceal the motive of their conduct, they began to affect an extreme anxiety at the danger to which the catholic faith was exposed, by the States reposing such unreserved confidence in one who was an avowed friend of the new religion. On this pretence, which never received any colour from the prince's conduct, they formed themselves into a confederacy, with a design to counteract him. And in order to give their party consistency, weight, and influence, they resolved to invite the archduke Matthias, brother of the emperor, to take upon him the government of the provinces.

The Flemish
nobles give
an invitation
to Matthias.

THIS resolution they not only formed, but executed, without the knowledge or authority of the States.

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States. They dispatched a messenger to Matthias with the greatest secrecy, and intreated him to leave Vienna without delay.

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NOTHING could exceed the temerity of those who gave this invitation, but the imprudence of Matthias in accepting it. For besides, that he was called only by the least powerful of the two parties into which the Flemings were divided, he could not be ignorant how injurious and affronting his conduct must be thought by his kinsman the king of Spain. It is some alleviation of his folly, that he was only twenty-two years of age; and that, considering the numerous progeny which his father had left behind him, there was little probability of his obtaining any settlement in Germany, suitable to his rank. At the time of the death of Requesens, he had made an offer of his service to the States, and he accepted greedily of the present invitation. His enterprise being of such a nature that he durst not discover it to the emperor, he set out from Vienna in the middle of the night, with a small number of attendants. No sooner was his brother apprised of his design, than messengers were dispatched to bring him back, and letters sent to the princes whose States he must pass through, intreating them to stop him; but Matthias travelled faster than the messengers, and, in a few days, reached the town of Lierras in Brabant.

His arrival.

THE States, astonished at the news of his arrival, and highly incensed against those who had invited him, complained loudly of the insult offered to their authority; and would have instantly formed the resolution of rejecting him, had they not been dissuaded from it by the prince of Orange. William foresaw the advantages which might arise from that rivalry, into which Matthias had entered with his kinsman Don John, and from the seeds of enmity which were thereby sown between the German and Spanish branches of the house of Austria. He reckoned it rather fortunate, that

He is admitted governor by the States.

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Don John had received so unpardonable an offence from the catholic nobility : and he considered how fatal to the general interest of the provinces all division must necessarily prove, in the present critical conjuncture of their affairs.

INFLUENCED by these considerations, he exhorted the States to overlook the injurious treatment which they had received, and persuaded them to agree, not only to receive Matthias with all the respect due to his high rank, but even to elect him governor, on such conditions as they should judge proper to require. This conduct, the most prudent that could have been adopted in the present circumstances, furnished no sort of triumph to the duke d'Arſchot, and the other catholic nobility. On the contrary, it mortified them exceedingly, to observe that Matthias owed his election not to them, but to the prince of Orange ; whose authority, which they intended to have controlled, was now considerably augmented, and more firmly established than before.

Mortifications of the nobility.

Soon after this, they received a still more sensible mortification. The duke d'Arſchot having lately been appointed governor of Flanders, had set out for the city of Ghent, to take possession of his government. Not long after his arrival, a deputation of the inhabitants having urged him with much importunity to reinstate them in their ancient privileges, of which they had been deprived, in the time of Charles V. he was heard to declare, that that seditious multitude, which made so much noise about their privileges, should ere long be punished as they deserved, notwithstanding their being supported by the prince of Orange. This saying being repeated by some who heard it, and circulated all over the city, inflamed the minds of the people with rage and indignation. They ran to arms, surrounded the governor's house, and threw him, and his friends and attendants, into prison. The prince of Orange, dreading the consequences

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sequences of so violent a procedure, and believing the duke to be now sufficiently humbled, interceded with the Ghentese, and procured his liberty; but no solicitations could induce them to releasè his adherents. In this manner was the duke d'Ar-schot's importance in the Netherlands almost annihilated. Matthias perceiving this, saw it to be his interest to connect himself with the party of which the prince of Orange was the head; and readily accepted the government, with a condition to which the States required his consent, that the prince should be his lieutenant general in all the branches of administration.

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MATTHIAS made his joyful entry into Brussels, in the beginning of the year one thousand five hundred and seventy-eight, when both he and the prince of Orange were admitted to their respective offices, after taking an oath to maintain the laws, and to regulate their conduct according to the instructions which should be given by the States^r.

1578.

DON JOHN sent an ambassador to protest in his name against these proceedings. But the States had some weeks before this time declared him an enemy to the Netherlands, and paid no regard to his protestation. As they were persuaded, however, that they had done nothing but what was authorised by the fundamental laws of the constitution, they wrote an account of their proceedings to the king, declaring that they still held their allegiance to him inviolable; and praying, that he would confirm their election of his kinsman Matthias, as the most likely means of restoring tranquillity to the provinces. They had very little reason to expect that Philip would listen to this request. He looked upon their conduct in a light extremely different from that in which they themselves regarded it; and considered their presumption in rejecting the governor whom he had ap-

Application
of the States
to Philip.

D 2

pointed,

^r Meteren, p. 196. 202

pointed, and still more that of nominating another without his consent, as an act of the most audacious rebellion. The States were too well acquainted with his character, not to entertain some apprehensions that such might be his sentiments; and therefore, while they omitted nothing in their power to assuage his resentment, they endeavoured to secure themselves against the effects of it, by interesting the neighbouring powers in their behalf, and by establishing unanimity between the religious parties into which the provinces were divided.

IN order to accomplish this last and most important object, a new treaty of union was concluded, in which, besides confirming the pacification of Ghent, the catholics and protestants promised mutually to support each other; and engaged, that they would join together in opposing all persecution, on account of religion, from whatever quarter it should come.

The emperor.

THE neighbouring powers were not unconcerned spectators of these transactions. The emperor saw with much anxiety, that those flames which had burnt so long in the Netherlands, were now likely to burst out with greater violence than ever. But having been educated at the court of Madrid under Philip, with whom he wished to live on amicable terms, he had shewn himself exceedingly displeased with the conduct of Matthias; had given Philip entire satisfaction with regard to his own intentions; and had resolved to take no other part in the dissensions of the Netherlands, but that of employing his intercession and advice. He did not however oppose the levies which the count Palatine was making for the service of the States, either because he knew that his prohibition would not have been regarded, or because he desired to preserve a strict neutrality between the contending parties.

HENRY

* Meteren, p. 197.

† Rodolph II.

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HENRY III. of France was too much occupied in his own dominions, to have leifure to enter deeply into the affairs of the Netherlands. For many ages, France had feen no king of whose reign the people entertained more fanguine expectations. Having, in his early youth, been appointed commander in chief by his brother Charles, he had given fignal proof of uncommon abilities. The French nation had flattered themfelves with the hopes of feeing their kingdom reftored by him to its ancient fplendor; his fame was univerfally diffufed; and the Polish nobility had, with general applaufe, conferred upon him their elective crown. But when, upon his brother's death, he left Poland, and fucceeded to the crown of France, it is inconceivable how great a change he feemed to have undergone. Irrefolute, inconfant, indolent, and voluptuous, with a mixture of the moft ridiculous fuperftition, he loft the confidence of the catholics as well as proteftants, whom he favoured and betrayed by turns. The unfteady and unskilful hand, with which he held the reins of government, added daily new force to the virulence of faction, till every member of the ftate, and almoft every individual in the kingdom was infected. The queen-mother employed all her art and influence to fupport his authority, but could not refrain her younger fon, the duke of Alençon, now duke of Anjou, from putting himfelf at the head, fometimes of one party, and fometimes of another, in oppofition to the king. To this prince, who was now the prefumptive heir of the crown, the Flemings addreffed themfelves, after having in vain applied to the king himfelf for protection. Anjou liftened with much pleafure to their application; and having conceived hopes of obtaining the fovereignty of the provinces, he made them the moft flattering promifes of affiftance. Henry, far from oppofing the duke's defigns, confidered his leaving France as the moft fortunate event that could happen; fince he would be thereby deliver-

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Henry III. of
France.

The States
apply for aid
to the duke
of Anjou.

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ed from a great number of restless intriguing spirits, by whom the tranquillity of his kingdom had been disturbed. But as he declined on this occasion to assist his brother in levying forces, partly from inability, and partly from the dread of embroiling himself with Philip, Anjou was not in a condition, till some time after the present period, to fulfil his engagements.

They receive
assistance
from Eliza-
beth.

THE Flemings mean-while received the most seasonable assistance from the queen of England. Don John had, some months before, endeavoured to prepossess Elizabeth in *his* favour; by representing, that the disturbances in the Netherlands were entirely owing to the prince of Orange, and his adherents, who had broken the pacification of Ghent, and by their intrigues prevailed upon the States to violate the perpetual edict. Elizabeth pretended to give credit to this representation, and ordered her ambassador to reproach the States with their infidelity, and even to threaten them with her resentment, in case they should refuse to adhere to their engagements. Thus far this artful princess went, in order to persuade Philip that she seriously desired his subjects in the Netherlands to maintain their allegiance. But in reality she wished for nothing less. In a political light (that light in which the conduct of Elizabeth ought almost always be considered) nothing could be more desirable to her, than that the troubles of the Low Countries should continue; and, if either of the two contending parties should finally prevail, that victory should fall rather on the side of the people, than of the king. But when she considered the inequality of the dispute between him and the Flemings, she dreaded that the latter, if left to themselves, must soon be compelled, either to relinquish their pretensions, or to throw themselves for protection into the arms of France. She had therefore resolved to watch carefully over their conduct,

conduct, and to afford them, from time to time, such assistance as their circumstances should require. She lent a favourable ear to the defence which was made by the prince of Orange and the States against Don John's accusation; and she admitted of their justification the more willingly, as in the representation given her of Don John's conduct on this occasion, she found reason to believe that his intentions were no less hostile with regard to herself, than with respect to the States and the prince of Orange. For William had taken particular care to inform her of some intercepted letters of Don John's, from which it appeared, that he entertained a secret correspondence with the queen of Scots; that he had formed a plan, to which the pope was privy, for setting that princess at liberty; and that he was incited to attempt this, not only by the desire of distressing Elizabeth, but likewise by the wild ambition of marrying the Scottish queen, and attaining, through her, possession of the British crowns.

AFTER this discovery, Elizabeth resolved no longer to keep any measures with Don John, but to exert herself with vigour in opposing his re-admission into the government of the Netherlands. With this intention she gave the most gracious reception to the marquis d'Havrée, the ambassador of the States, and entered readily into a treaty, by which she engaged to furnish them with an immediate supply, both of money and troops; upon condition, that the commander of these troops should be admitted into the council of state; and that, during the continuance of the war, no step should be taken, nor any alliance formed, without her consent^a.

ELIZABETH had no sooner subscribed this treaty, than being still desirous to avoid an open breach

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^a Meteren, p. 197. Bentivoglio, p. 202. Camden, anno 1577, &c.

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breach with Philip, she dispatched an ambassador ^w to Madrid, to represent to him, that in her late transaction with the States, it was far from her intention to encourage them to withdraw their allegiance; that, on the contrary, she had employed the only means likely to prove effectual to prevent them from casting themselves in despair into the hands of some other power. She was deeply interested, she acknowledged, in saving her neighbours from oppression; especially the Flemings, with whom the commercial interests of her subjects had long been, and still were so closely connected. This she hoped would plead her excuse for exhorting him to substitute in the room of his brother a governor, in whom the people could repose greater trust and confidence; and with whom she herself could maintain a more friendly intercourse, than she could ever hold with Don John, after having discovered his design to invade her dominions. She concluded with intreating him to redress the grievances of his Flemish subjects; offering to mediate between him and them, if her mediation could be of use; and declaring, that if they should refuse to fulfil their late engagements, or attempt to make any innovation contrary to the pacification of Ghent, she would assist him in reducing them to obedience by force of arms ^x.

ELIZABETH could not mean any thing by this embassy, but the fulfilling of an empty ceremonial, which was received by Philip, and performed by her with equal insincerity. She did not wait for a return to her embassy, but proceeded instantly to carry into execution her treaty with the States. Both the troops and money which she engaged to furnish, were immediately sent over; and the latter was remitted by the States to prince Casimire, to enable him to complete his levies.

THE

^w Thomas Wilkes, clerk of the council. ^x Carte, book xviii. Camden.

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THE States had collected a considerable body of forces, which they stationed in the neighbourhood of Namur; and if they had followed the counsel of the prince of Orange, who exhorted them to lay siege to that important fortress, they might have made themselves masters of it, and prevented the return of the Spanish troops. But many among them were still unshaken in their allegiance to the king, as well as in their attachment to the popish faith; whom nothing but their remembrance of the cruelties of Alva, and the late enormities of the Spanish troops, could have induced to concur in the measures which the majority had adopted. These men fondly imagined that Philip would be moved with their calamities, and persuaded to comply with their requests. Being for this reason unwilling to begin hostilities, they urged strongly the expediency of a defensive war: and thus the army was suffered, for several months, to remain inactive, and time imprudently given for the arrival of the Italian and Spanish troops.

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Imprudent
delays of the
States.

ALTHOUGH Philip did not entirely approve of his brother's conduct, and desired to have obtained his ends by negociation and artifice; yet, having failed in this way, he resolved, without hesitation, to employ force; and he had accordingly sent orders to Alexander Farnese, the prince of Parma, to lead back the troops from Italy, to the Netherlands, without delay. On their arrival at Namur, being joined by other troops, which Don John had levied in the neighbouring provinces, they composed an army of fifteen thousand foot and two thousand horse; while that of the States amounted only to ten thousand foot and one thousand five hundred horse; and was no less inferior to the enemy in discipline, than in number. The States

The return
of the Spa-
nish troops.

now

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now saw their folly in having neglected to make themselves masters of Namur, as an entrance had thereby been secured for the Spaniards into the centre of the Netherlands.

Battle of
Gemblours.

DON JOHN was at this time in a situation much more suitable to the talents which he possessed, than those negotiations and treaties in which he had been hitherto engaged. He had longed with extreme impatience for the arrival of the forces, and ardently desired to be revenged upon the States for the injurious treatment which he imagined he had received. Having got information that their army, commanded by the Sieur de Goignies, had left their camp in the neighbourhood of Namur, and were retiring towards Brussels, he resolved to attack them on their march. With this intention he sent his cavalry before, under the prince of Parma, and followed them himself, as quickly as possible, with the foot. Farnese executed the trust committed to him with great valour. At the head of his battalion he attacked the Flemish cavalry with uncommon fury, and though they gave him a spirited reception, he soon compelled them to retire. In the mean time Don John came forward with a chosen body of infantry, and afforded him such a powerful support, as enabled him to drive the enemy's horse before him, till he entered along with them into the ranks of their main army. The Flemings believing the whole Spanish forces to be at hand, and being utterly unprepared for so sudden an attack, were soon thrown into confusion and dispersed. About three thousand were killed, and a great number, with the commander in chief, were taken prisoners. The loss on the side

January 3: of the conquerors was inconsiderable.

AFTER this victory Don John reduced Gemblours, Louvain, Sichem, Nivelles, and several other places, both in Brabant and Hainault. He desired likewise to have laid siege to Brussels; but his council of war were of opinion, that his strength was

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was not adequate to so great an enterprize, and thought it more expedient to aim at easier conquests, till his army should be reinforced.

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THE States in the mean time received an abundant compensation for their losses in the southern provinces, by the acquisition of Amsterdam. To this wealthy city, which even at the present period was the greatest in the northern provinces, the duke of Alva had, as mentioned above, given the most particular attention; having expelled the protestants, and put the government entirely into the hands of rigid catholics. These men, supported by a numerous garrison, had baffled all the attempts which had been made by the States of Holland to reduce them. But being now hemmed in by their countrymen both by sea and land, and their trade almost ruined, they at last consented to accede to the pacification of Ghent, and agreed to disband the popish garrison, to recall the protestant exiles, and to allow them to hold their religious assemblies without the city. It was not long before they repented of these concessions. The protestants being inflamed with zeal for their religion; impatient under the restraints which in the late agreement had been laid upon them, fired with resentment for former injuries, and suspicious that the catholics were again meditating schemes for their expulsion, they flew to arms, and having suppressed the exercise of the popish faith, they drove all the priests, and others whom they suspected of malignant designs, out of the city².

Amsterdam
accedes to
the confederacy.
February 8th

IN the midst of these transactions John de Noircarmes, Baron de Selles, arrived from Spain, with Philip's answer to the application which the States had made to him some months before. It was such as they had reason to expect, and contained an absolute denial of their requests, with regard to the removal of Don John, and the ratification of the election of Matthias.

Philip's answer to the States.

CONVINCED

² Van Meteren, p. 207.

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The States
prosecute
the war.

CONVINCED by this denial, of the folly of those hopes which they had entertained, that the king would yield to their entreaties, and sensible that they had suffered considerable loss, from that want of dispatch and secrecy which is incident to the procedure of a numerous assembly; they enlarged the powers of Matthias and the prince of Orange, and invested them, and the council of state, with authority to conduct the operations of the war, without having recourse on every occasion to the assembly of the States.

No time after this was unnecessarily lost. The troops which had been dispersed at Gemblours were collected, and of these, and the new levies, an army was composed, amounting to eight thousand foot and two thousand horse, partly Flemings, and partly Scots and English. This army was stationed in the neighbourhood of Lierres, in the centre of Brabant, under the command of the count de Bossut. Don John's army, after he had put garrisons into the towns which he had taken, was still superior in number; and therefore he resolved to march towards Bossut, before the auxiliaries, which the States expected from France and Germany, should arrive. But he soon found that he had now to contend both with troops and a general much superior to those whom he had encountered at Gemblours. Bossut had, from a sense of the inferiority of his forces, pitched his camp near the village of Rimenant, in a situation extremely advantageous for preventing the enemy from penetrating further into the provinces. On the one side it was defended by the Demer, and on the other, by a wood; and was fortified both before and behind with strong entrenchments. Notwithstanding this, Don John resolved to attack it, unless he could provoke the count to quit his lines, and give him battle. The prince of Parma, who from his early youth was no less wise than brave, remonstrated against this resolution, as
being

Battle of Rimenant.

The prince
of Parma.

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being dangerous and desperate. But Don John, being confirmed in his purpose by the other officers, gave orders for his army to advance, after having sent before a select body of troops, to attack an important post, without the camp, which was guarded by some English and Scotch forces, under colonel Norris. Among the assailants was Don Alphonso Martinez de Leyva, at the head of a company of two thousand men, whom he maintained at his own expence, and who were all either gentlemen, or soldiers who had distinguished themselves in former wars. These men attacked the British troops with uncommon fury. After a short resistance, the latter began to retreat, but in good order, and with their faces turned towards the enemy. The Spaniards, to second whom Don John had sent several battalions of fresh troops, not suspecting any artifice, and believing the enemy to be intimidated, followed them with much precipitation, till they had past a narrow defile within reach of the artillery of the Flemish camp. Norris then returned to the charge, and the combat was renewed with greater fury than ever. He was reinforced with troops sent him from the camp, and both parties, being nearly equal, seemed determined to die or conquer. This gallant Englishman animated his army by his own example, and had three horses killed under him. The Scots, impatient of the heat, fought in their shirts, and astonished the enemy with the singularity of their appearance. In the mean time, a body of troops, which had been placed in ambush, attacked the Spaniards in flank, and Bossut continued to fire upon them incessantly with his artillery. They must all have perished, had not the prince of Parma obtained liberty from Don John to advance at the head of the cavalry to their relief. By his superior prudence, he would have prevented this inconsiderate enterprise; and now, by his prudence and bravery united, he saved the troops from those fatal consequences, to which through their

The Spaniards repulsed by the English.

August 1st.

OWN

own and the general's confidence, they had been exposed. About nine hundred men however fell on the field of battle, and a few more were taken prisoners^a.

DON JOHN, having thus failed in his attempt, and being sensible that he could not, with his present army, keep the field against the numerous forces that were ready to pour in upon him from France and Germany retreated, with the resolution of acting for the future on the defensive only, and pitched his camp under the fortifications of Namur.

Treaty of the
States with
Anjou.

THE States concluded about this time their treaty with the duke of Anjou, which consisted of the following articles:—That, under the title of Protector of the Netherlands, the duke should furnish, at his own expence, ten thousand foot and two thousand horse: that all the conquests which he should make on the Flanders side of the Maese, should belong to the States; and those on the other side to himself: that, for the accommodation of his troops, Landrecy, and Queinoy in Hainault, and Bapaume in Artois, should be put in his possession: that the States should not enter into any agreement with Don John, without the duke's consent: and that in case they should hereafter think proper to elect another sovereign, they should make choice of the duke; but that in the mean time the government should remain entire in the hands of the States.

Designs of
the States.

AGREEABLY to the first article of this treaty, Anjou had assembled a considerable body of troops in the neighbourhood of Mons, to which place the States sent a solemn embassy to intreat that he would quicken his march into the interior provinces. They intended, that their own army should unite with his, and that of Casimire, and that

^a Bentivoglio, book x. Strabo, l. iii. Meteren, p 225. Thuanus, lib. lxvi. sect. xii.

that all the three armies should act in concert with one another, in expelling Don John, before he should receive a reinforcement from Spain or Italy. Nor was it without apparent reason that they entertained the hopes of accomplishing this design. Prince Casimire had passed the Rhine and the Maese, and advanced as far as the town of Dieft in Brabant. His army, when joined with that of the States, amounted nearly to forty thousand foot and twenty thousand horse, and was greatly superior to any which Don John could muster to oppose it.

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Their number: army

BUT a variety of causes concurred in rendering almost useless these mighty preparations; and a spirit of division arose, by which the people in the more fertile provinces lost for ever that liberty, for which they had so strenuously contended, at the very time when it was most in their power to secure it on a firm and permanent foundation. For although, according to the testimony of the catholic, as well as the protestant historians, nothing could exceed the prudence and moderation with which the prince of Orange conducted the affairs of government, it soon appeared, that no human wisdom was sufficient to preserve harmony and concord, where there were so many grounds of jealousy and discontent. Of this discontent and jealousy, religious bigotry was the principal, but not the only cause. Ambition and interest joined their influence to that of religion, and not only divided the people themselves into factions, the most inveterate and hostile, but created suspicion and discord between them and the foreign powers which they had called to their assistance.

Its operations rendered ineffectual.

THE queen of England had heard, with great uneasiness, of the late treaty between the States and the duke of Anjou. She knew not, at this time, how far Henry was concerned in his brother's enterprise, nor what schemes of conquest these two princes might have formed. She considered

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considered what great advantages their neighbourhood afforded them for the execution of these schemes; and foresaw the prejudice which might accrue to the English nation, if the Netherlands were to fall under subjection to the crown of France. In order to prevent this, and counterbalance the power and influence of Anjou, she had made such ample remittances of money to prince Casimire, as had enabled him to augment the number of his army, which consisted wholly of protestants, considerably above what the States had either expected or desired. This alarmed the jealousy of all the catholics in the Low Countries, who dreaded the approach of so great an army of reformers, and suspected that Casimire, in concert with Elizabeth, had conceived the design of extirpating the popish faith. They did not conceal their apprehensions. Even the prince of Orange, and other moderate protestants, joined in remonstrating with Casimire on the necessity of his dismissing a part of his forces. But this remonstrance served only to alienate him from the prince of Orange and the council, and to render him less attentive to their instructions with regard to the conduct of the war. He was likewise highly offended with the preference which the States had given to the count of Bossut, by appointing him commander in chief of the army; and he made them feel his resentment, by the slowness of all his military operations, and his continual demands of supplies for the payment of his troops ^b.

Intemperate
zeal and am-
bition of the
Protestants.

BUT the intemperate zeal and ambition of the protestants was productive of still more pernicious effects. Not satisfied with the security from persecution which they had enjoyed since the pacification of Ghent, they took courage from the great number of protestants in the army, and petitioned Matthias and the States, to be allowed to hold their religious assemblies openly in churches, and to be admitted, on the same footing with the

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^b Reidanus, p. 25, 26.

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the catholics, to the several offices of government. They ought certainly to have remained silent, as they had done hitherto, till the common enemy had been expelled, and the public tranquillity established. Yet their conduct admits of some apology; their party had greater influence now than it was likely to possess, if the catholics were delivered from their dread of the Spaniards, and they could not foresee those fatal consequences with which their application was afterwards attended.

BUT whatever judgment may be formed of their discretion, the States thought it necessary, lest the army should have proved refractory, to comply with their requests. The pacification of Ghent required that religion should remain on the same footing on which it stood at the time of that treaty, till the States of all the provinces should be assembled; yet the States, now partially assembled, consented, not only that the protestants should have access to all public offices, but likewise that they should have churches allowed to them in every place where a hundred families resided; upon this condition, that in Holland and Zealand the same indulgence should be granted to the catholic inhabitants. To this decree they gave the name of the Peace of Religion; and each of the provinces was left at liberty to accept or reject it, as they should judge expedient.

IN some cities it proved a salutary remedy for the disorders with which they were distracted; but, in many others, it added malignity to that poison, which raged in the minds of the more violent religionists, and was the source of the most pernicious animosity and discord. It gave no contentment to the zealots of either party, but contributed to inflame them more than ever against each other, by adding fresh materials to that inveterate jealousy and rancour which their bigotry inspired, but which had been laid asleep for some time past, by their apprehensions of the

The unhappy consequences.

common danger. The catholics every where, but in a few cities of Flanders and Brabant, opposed the execution of this decree; and the reformers derived little advantage from it, except in those places where they overpowered their antagonists by superior numbers. In the provinces of Artois and Hainault, the people rejected the decree with the most determined obstinacy, and refused to allow the exercise of any other religion but the catholic within their territories; while the protestants in Ghent and other places, actuated by the same intolerant and bigoted spirit, expelled the popish ecclesiastics, seized their effects, and spoiled the churches of their ornaments.

Discord between the
Walloon
and Flemings

BETWEEN the people of Ghent and the Walloons a particular ground of enmity had subsisted, ever since the former had cast the duke d'Arſchot and his attendants into prison. For most of these were persons of rank in the Walloon provinces; and the Ghentese had not only rejected every solicitation in their behalf, but had even treated them with severity during their confinement. The Walloons were, for this reason, the more readily incensed by the accounts which they received of the late enormities committed against the catholics, which they justly regarded as a violation, on the part of the protestants, of their late engagements. Forgetful therefore of the danger which threatened them, and listening only to the voice of indignation and resentment, they began to separate themselves from the other provinces, and refused to contribute their share of the money necessary for the payment of the troops. "We took arms," said they, "to vindicate our liberty; but what will it avail us to be delivered from the Spanish yoke, if we must submit to a yoke no less galling and intolerable, imposed upon us by our countrymen; who, under the pretext of great zeal against the tyranny of the Spaniards, shew now that their only design has been to tyrannise

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“ tyrannise over us themselves.” The other provinces represented to them the mischievous consequences with which their conduct must be attended, and accompanied their representations with prayers and threats; but the Walloons remained inflexible, and soon afterwards they gave a striking proof of their hostile disposition, by refusing to deliver the towns of Landrecy, Queinois, and Bapaume, to the duke of Anjou, in conformity to the treaty above recorded. Not satisfied with this, they began to prepare openly for war, and employed the contributions, which had been raised for paying the army of the States, in levying forces against the Flemings. The Flemings quickly armed themselves in their defence, and several rencounters happened between the Walloons and them, that were equally pernicious to both.

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1578.

PRINCE Casimire's troops and those of the States had been for some time past united, and Don John was not possessed of a force sufficient to oppose them; but the factious and refractory spirit of the Walloons and Flemings had diffused itself into almost every part of the Netherlands, except the provinces of Holland and Zealand. Many cities withheld their contributions, and the army was extremely ill provided with every thing necessary to render the operations of the campaign effectual. Bossut's principal object was to compel the enemy to a general engagement; and for this purpose, after taking two or three towns of little consequence, he led his troops within view of the camp in which Don John had entrenched himself, under the fortifications of Namur. With an army so much superior in number to the enemy, the count might have forced the entrenchments; but being neither furnished with pioneers, cannon, or a sufficient quantity of ammunition, and finding Don John unalterably determined to keep within his camp, he was obliged to retire. His troops, in the mean time, were highly discontented, on account of their want of pay. His

The effects
of that dis-
cord.

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discipline was unavoidably relaxed. The country was oppressed and plundered. Casimire accepted of an invitation from the Ghentese, to assist them with a part of his forces against the Walloons. It became dangerous to keep the remainder of the army any longer in the neighbourhood of the Spanish camp, and it was soon afterwards found impracticable to support it. A part of the troops therefore was disbanded, and the rest were put into garrison in the fortified towns.

THE duke of Anjou's army was not better provided with the means of Subsistence than that of the States, and its operations were equally insignificant. Conscious of his inability to fulfil his engagements, Anjou grasped at those prettexts for eluding them, which the conduct of Casimire, and that of the Walloons, afforded him. He complained bitterly of the treatment which he received from the latter, who not only refused him admittance into the towns which the States had promised for the accommodation of his troops, but shewed themselves no less unwilling to furnish him with provisions, than if he had come to invade, and not to protect and defend them. He seems likewise to have suspected, and not without some reason, that Casimire had formed some private designs, inconsistent with that establishment which he himself had in view in the southern provinces; and that he had carried his troops to the assistance of the people of Ghent, in order to pave the way for executing those designs. He therefore refused to join his army with that of Bossut, unless Casimire should return to it; and when Matthias and the prince of Orange failed in their endeavours to prevail on Casimire, (to whom the Ghentese had advanced a considerable sum of money, to induce him to remain with them) Anjou broke up his camp, and suffered a part of his army to go over to the Baron de Montigny, who was commander in chief at that time of the forces of the Walloons.

SUCH

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SUCH was the conclusion of this campaign, and such the issue of all the mighty preparations which the States had made for a vigorous prosecution of the war. The people themselves, instead of uniting their efforts against the common enemy, wage war with one another, in violation of the most solemn engagements, into which they had entered only a few months before; and the princes, who had undertaken to deliver the Flemings from the Spanish yoke, enlist themselves, in opposition to each other, under the banners of those inveterate factions, which threaten this unhappy people with destruction.

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1578.

Conclusion
of the cam-
paign.

CASIMIR went over to England to justify his conduct to Elizabeth, and Anjou sent an ambassador to the States to make an apology for *his*, by representing, that his troops had joined those of Montigny without his consent; but that the States had no reason to dread the consequences of that step, since the Ghentese would be thereby more easily restrained from their excesses. The States, thinking it prudent to dissemble their resentment, admitted of his apology; and, that they might still remain on friendly terms with him, they assured his ambassadors, that they had a just sense of gratitude for the efforts which the duke had made in their behalf; that, as soon as possible, they would refund his expences; and that, if they should ever find it necessary to elect another prince, in the place of the king of Spain, they would make him an offer of the sovereignty.

DURING the course of the transactions that have been related, Don John had kept his troops within their camp at Namur. They might now have left it without danger; but Don John had been seized, some weeks before, with a violent illness, which cut him off before he had reached the thirtieth year of his age. His death was by some ascribed to poison; but, according to others, it was owing partly to disease, and partly to that

Death of
Don John of
Austria.

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October.

chagrin which he conceived from the negligence with which his repeated applications for money and troops were treated by the Spanish ministers. Fond to excess of military glory, and conscious of talents which would probably have ensured success, he lamented bitterly the necessity which the weakness of his army imposed upon him, of remaining so long inactive, and solicited his brother for a reinforcement with the most earnest importunity. Nor was it only because Philip was averse from a vigorous prosecution of the war, that he deferred complying with his request. After that renown, which Don John acquired in the battle of Lepanto, his conduct, as above related, contained so clear a discovery of his views, as could not but alarm the suspicious temper of the king, who thenceforth kept a watchful eye upon all his brother's most secret motions; and when he sent him to the Netherlands, resolved never to intrust him with such a numerous army as might enable him to execute any ambitious design. Philip's suspicions were, during his brother's residence in the Low Countries, kept perpetually awake, by reports of his having formed a design of marrying the queen of Scots. To these reports Philip gave credit, perhaps too easily. By *his* orders, Don John's favourite, and secretary Escovedo, who had fomented his master's ambition, were privately put to death. It was believed by many, that he issued the like orders with regard to his brother, and that this young heroic prince died of poison, given him by certain popish ecclesiastics, instigated by the court of Spain. But whatever ground there was for this persuasion, there is little room to doubt that, from jealousy of his brother, more than any other cause, Philip withheld the supplies necessary for carrying on the war. And to this circumstance, the troops of the States were indebted for their preservation from that ruin, to which their divisions had exposed them^d.

THE

^d Meteren, p. 234. Grotius, &c.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

BOOK XV.

DON JOHN having on his death-bed appointed the prince of Parma to succeed him, his choice was soon afterwards approved, and ratified by the king.

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The prince
of Parma
governor.
His charac-
ter.

THIS young prince had on many occasions, since his arrival in the Netherlands, given proof of consummate prudence and the most intrepid valour. Temperate, vigilant, and indefatigable, he could descend to the most minute detail in all military operations, and was always the first to expose himself to toil and danger, and the last to retire. Pliant in his manners, and insinuating in his address; he could speak most of the European languages, and accommodate himself to the soldiers of all the different nations of which the army was composed. He possessed a vigour of bodily constitution equal to that of his mind, joined with an elevated martial air and aspect, which served, in the time of battle, to fill the enemy with terror, and to inspire his own troops with courage and confidence of success.

He had no sooner performed the last offices to his friend and kinsman, than he applied himself assiduously to fulfil the duties of that important station to which he was now advanced. While the army of the States remained in the field, he was obliged, through the smallness of his numbers, to follow the same plan which his predecessor had pursued, and to keep his little army strongly fortified within their camp; but when, from the causes above explained, not only the army of the States, but likewise the Germans and French under Casimire and Anjou, were all either disbanded, or put into winter-quarters, Farnese, considering this as the proper season for action, resolved to undertake the siege of some important place, by the acquisition of which he might encrease his resources for carrying on the war.

He hesitated for some time, whether he should enter first upon the siege of Maestricht, or that of Antwerp. The benefit which he would have derived from the possession of the latter of these places, was greater than any which could arise from that of the former, as Antwerp was the principal seat of wealth and commerce in the Netherlands, and was situated in the most advantageous manner for prosecuting the conquest of the maritime provinces; but having weighed attentively the difficulties to be surmounted in the siege of a place of so great extent and strength as Antwerp, he wisely resolved to begin with the siege of Maestricht, in which he could engage with fewer forces, and a greater probability of success ^a.

In order to conceal his design from the States, he directed his march towards Antwerp, and had a sharp rencounter with a body of French and British forces, which were sent out to obstruct his approach. These he forced to retire under the fortifications of the city; immediately after which he

^a Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. i.

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he turned back suddenly, and invested Maestricht, before the States had time to furnish that town with the necessary supplies of stores and provisions.

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THE inhabitants were not numerous in proportion to the extent of the place^b; but it was strongly fortified, and the want of numbers was abundantly supplied by the martial spirit of the people, who, being exposed from their situation to frequent invasions from foreign enemies, were well accustomed to the use of arms. About fifteen hundred of them were enrolled; and by these, and a thousand regular troops, together with two thousand of the country people, who served as pioneers, Maestricht was defended for almost four months, against an army of 15,000 foot and 4000 horse, the best-disciplined and bravest troops in Europe, whose operations were directed by the greatest military genius of the age. Amongst the besieged there were two persons, Schwartzembourg de Herle, a Fleming, and Tappin, a Frenchman, who conducted the defence with a degree of wisdom and intrepidity that excited universal admiration and applause.

He lays siege
to Maestricht

THE prince of Parma, having arrived before the town in the beginning of March, sent Mondragone, with a part of the army, to the east side of the river, to invest the town of Vich; whilst he himself remained on the other side, where he intended to make his principal attack. His first object was to prevent the States from introducing any supplies or reinforcements. With this view, he shut up the Maese with two bridges of boats, one above and the other below the town, and drew quite round his camp, on both sides of the river, strong lines of circumvallation. Immediately after taking this precaution, he began to make his approach to the walls by trenches. The garrison had the courage to make several sallies, by which his

Conduct of
the siege.

^b It is five Italian miles in circumference.

his operations were retarded. At length, however, when by perseverance and the power of superior numbers, his trenches were sufficiently advanced, he planted two batteries, one against the gate of Tongres, and the other against the curtain, between the gate of Hoxter and that of the Cross. While the batteries were played off with great success, the royalists pushed forward the trenches, and were ready to enter into the fossé, or ditch. The breach at the gate of Tongres, was the first made practicable, and Farnese resolved to assault it with a select body of troops, drawn from the several nations of which his army was composed. By thus mingling them together, he enflamed their ardour and emulation; but they met with equal ardour on the part of their opponents, and, after an obstinate and bloody conflict, were obliged to retire.

Brave defence of
Maastricht.

THE prince, believing that this first attempt had failed through the smallness of the breach, renewed the fire of his batteries with redoubled fury, and prepared for a second attack. In order to weaken the garrison by dividing it, he resolved to make an assault at each of the two breaches at the same time. His troops advanced, in the face of the enemy's cannon, with the most undaunted intrepidity. The besieged stood undismayed till they approached, and nothing could exceed the fury with which both parties began the combat. Their fire-arms soon ceased to be of use to them; for they came immediately to close fight, in which they could employ only their pikes and swords. In one of the breaches De Herle, and in the other Tappin, gave the most splendid proofs of capacity and valour. The assailants, enraged at meeting with such obstinate resistance from an enemy so much inferior in number, exerted their utmost vigour to overpower them. The action was furious and desperate. The ruins of the wall, and the ground on both sides, were strewed with the

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the dead and dying. Stones hurled down from the bulwarks, and artificial fires, which the besieged launched among the assailants, increased the confusion. Those fires happened to lay hold of the barrels of gun-powder which stood near for the use of the combatants. The explosion was terrible, and many on both sides perished by this fatal accident. The air resounded with cries, and shrieks, and groans. The earth was covered with mangled carcases; yet those who survived still maintained their ground with the same unconquerable obstinacy as before, and, from the horrid scene which lay around them, seemed only to derive fresh rage and fury. The prince of Parma gave orders at last, with much reluctance, for founding a retreat. The resolution and fortitude of the besieged, he perceived, were not to be overcome. Even if he could have mounted the breach, and kept possession of it, this would not have availed him, as other fortifications had been raised within, which rendered the town almost as impregnable as before.

UPON reviewing his troops, the prince found that many of his best officers had fallen, and that the regiments of Spanish veterans were extremely diminished. He soon completed his numbers by making draughts from the garrisons of the towns in his possession. But when he reflected on the character of the besieged, he perceived the necessity of laying aside all thoughts of taking the town by storm, and resolved to content himself with the slower method of undermining the fortifications, employing for this purpose a prodigious number of pioneers, and taking effectual care in the mean time, to render it impossible for the besieged to receive any reinforcement or supplies.

THE States were not neglectful of the preservation of a place, where both the garrison and inhabitants had shewn themselves so worthy of their attention. Having some time before received the celebrated

The States
attempt in
vain to re-
lieve it.

celebrated La Noue into their service, they had appointed him governor of Maestricht, and given him the charge of conducting thither the reinforcements which they intended for the relief of the besieged. Nothing was omitted by La Noue to fulfil their expectations; but so pernicious were the consequences of that spirit of discord, which still raged as furiously as ever, between the protestants and catholics, that, although the council of state, seconded by the prince of Orange, gave him all the assistance in their power, he was never able to collect a force sufficient to execute his purpose. The situation therefore of the besieged was become extremely deplorable. The garrison, which in the beginning of the siege consisted of a thousand men, did not amount to more than four hundred, and the citizens and country people had suffered a proportionable diminution. Their provisions began to fail, and their store of gun-powder was nearly exhausted.

THEIR distresses were much augmented towards the middle of June, by their loss of a ravelin, which had enabled them to give great annoyance to the enemy. To acquire possession of this ravelin had been the chief object of the prince of Parma's operations for several weeks; and, though he met with the most spirited resistance, he at length accomplished his design, and could, with a large cavalier which he constructed, overlook the walls, and scour the town with his guns, almost from the one end to the other. Still however the besieged, animated by the hopes of relief, refused to capitulate.

Maestricht
taken by sur-
prise.

BUT the siege was brought to a conclusion much sooner than either of the two contending parties had reason to expect. On the 29th of June, it was suspected by some Spanish soldiers, that the wonted vigilance of the garrison was relaxed. In order to know the truth with certainty, these men crept

crept silently to the top of the rampart, and found that the defendants were not only few in number, but overpowered with fatigue and heat, and buried in sleep. Of this they carried information to the general; who without delay ordered such of his troops as were nearest, to ascend the rampart with as little noise as possible. They were immediately followed by all the rest of the army. The garrison were thus suddenly overwhelmed, and almost all of them were put to the sword. The inhabitants fought desperately; but they sunk at last under the superior force of the assailants, who spared neither sex nor age; and continued the slaughter, till of eight thousand citizens, only three hundred remained. De Herle escaped by disguising himself in the habit of a menial servant; and Farnese issued strict orders to spare the life of the valiant Tappin^c.

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DURING the siege of Maestricht, various political negociations were carried on by the opposite parties. The prince of Orange had at this time the chief direction of all the measures that were pursued by the States and council; Matthias having, from a consciousness of his own want of experience, left the entire administration in his hands. The dissensions between the Walloons and Flemings had from the beginning given him deep concern, and he had omitted nothing in his power to heal them. Among the Walloons he had little influence, by reason of their abhorrence of his religion, and the jealousy which they had conceived of his designs. On the other hand, the Ghentese, who in that age, were noted for their turbulent and seditious spirit, had been wrought up by certain factious leaders to a degree of madness, and were long deaf to all the remonstrances which he could employ. St. Aldegond, whom he sent to deal with them, exerted, but in vain, all the address and eloquence for which he was so highly celebrated. The interposition of Matthias and

The prince of Orange labours to quell the tumults in Ghent.

the

^c Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. i. Meteren, lib. ix.

the States was equally ineffectual. Nor did they pay any greater regard to the representations and threats of Elizabeth, who sent over an ambassador^a on purpose to persuade them. At length the prince of Orange went himself to treat with them. They had lately inveighed against him, with great severity, for his moderation towards the catholics; and had suffered some of their preachers to arraign him on this account, as insincere in his religious profession. But, being flattered with that regard and confidence of which his present visit was expressive, they resumed their wonted affection to his person; and, after he had staid among them some weeks, they complied with the several requests which they had hitherto rejected. They consented to make restitution of the goods of which they had plundered the popish ecclesiastics; permitted the re-establishment of the rites and ceremonies of the Romish church, forbade all abusive language, whether in the pulpit or in private assemblies, and engaged to yield a more prompt obedience for the future to the authority of the States^c.

It soon however appeared, that nothing but William's personal influence had induced them to make these concessions. In a few months afterwards, being incited by the same factious leaders to whom they had formerly listened, they indulged themselves in the most unjustifiable excesses; they plundered the churches and monasteries, expelled the ecclesiastics from the town, and seized their effects, which they distributed among the Germans, whom they had called to their assistance against the Walloons. These and other enormities occasioned the prince of Orange to visit the Ghentese a second time; when they made him an offer of the government of the province. He prudently declined accepting this offer; but having again employed all his influence to quash the present dissensions in the city, he succeeded

^a Mr. Davidson.^c Thuanus, lib. lxvi.

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ceeded so far as to be able to compel Imbise the chief magistrate, together with his factious adherents, to leave the city. He likewise put the magistracy into the hands of the more moderate reformers, set at liberty such of the Walloon nobility as were still in prison, and procured for the catholic inhabitants, liberty of private worship, and security from molestation ^f.

WILLIAM laboured with no less earnestness to assuage the resentment of the Walloons, who, although they had not been the first aggressors, persisted in their hostile disposition, with the most unconquerable obstinacy. By the artifices of Matthew de Moulard, bishop of Arras, the count de la Lain, the marquis de Roubais, and others of the nobility, who beheld with deep malignity William's unrivalled credit and authority, the people had conceived the most incurable suspicions, that, far from being actuated by a disinterested attachment to the civil or religious liberty of the provinces, he intended only his own exaltation, and was preparing to establish it upon the ruins of the catholic faith. They lent a deaf ear therefore to every plan of accommodation that was proposed, either by the prince himself, or by Matthias and the States; who, they knew, were entirely directed by his councils ^g.

THE prince of Parma was too sagacious not to discern the advantage which this disposition of the Walloons afforded him, for drawing them back to their allegiance. Soon after the death of Don John of Austria, he had, for this purpose, begun a negotiation with their leaders; upon which he had bestowed particular attention, in the midst of those military occupations in which the siege of Maestricht had engaged him. In order to frustrate his endeavours, the prince of Orange and the States remonstrated to the Walloons on the infidelity which would be justly imputed to them, if

The prince
of Parma
gains over
the Walloons

^f Grotius, lib. iii.

^g Reidanus, lib. ii. p. 29.

if they should enter into any separate terms of agreement; and represented to them the danger to which they would thereby expose *themselves*, as well as the other provinces, of being again enthralled by the Spaniards. The Walloons could not entirely divest themselves of the scruples, which these remonstrances were calculated to excite; nor were they free from those apprehensions of the Spanish tyranny, by which the other provinces were so much disquieted. They had not forgot the scenes of treachery and violence, of which they had been so often witnesses; and found it difficult to rely on the promises of those, whose insincerity they had so frequently experienced. On the other hand, their bigotry, joined with the inveterate jealousy which the nobility entertained of the prince of Orange, formed an insurmountable obstacle against any agreement with the Flemings. *That* hatred with which they had been long actuated against the Spaniards, began to yield to a more implacable aversion against the protestants; and in this they were confirmed by the address of the bishop of Arras, and the other agents of the prince of Parma; whose proposals of accommodation they were now inclined to embrace, provided it could be done consistently with those solemn engagements, under which they had lately come to the other provinces. To these engagements, according to the sense in which they themselves understood them, they adhered with inflexible fidelity; and persisted to the last in requiring that all foreign troops should be immediately dismissed; that the pacification of Ghent should be fully executed; and that Philip should recognise their right to form alliances either within or without the Netherlands, in case of any infraction on his part of the articles of this pacification.

The Spanish
and Italian
troops sent
out of the
Netherlands.

Of their several demands, there was none which the prince of Parma found it so difficult to digest, as that of sending away the foreign troops. *Their* place, he knew, could not be supplied by the undisciplined

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undisciplined forces of the country; and he dreaded that he should be obliged to abandon the plan which he had formed, for subduing the maritime provinces. The king, to whom he applied for precise instructions, was no less averse from this concession. But Philip, considering the recovery of the Walloons (the most warlike of all the inhabitants of the Netherlands) as a matter of the last importance; especially in the present juncture, when his exchequer was drained by the expence which he had incurred in the conquest of Portugal; and hoping, that by the indulgent measures which he had resolved to espouse in his treatment of the Walloons, he should be able ere long to obtain their consent to whatever he should require of them, he sent orders to Farnese to hasten the conclusion of the treaty; and it was accordingly concluded on the following terms: That all foreign troops in the service of the king, should leave the Netherlands in six weeks, and never return thither without the consent of the Walloon provinces: that an army of national troops should be levied, to the payment of which the king might apply the subsidies to be granted by the States: that all persons in public offices should take an oath to maintain the catholic religion: that all the privileges of the provinces should remain inviolate: and that the government should be preserved in the same form in which it had been left by the late emperor when he resigned his dominions ^h.

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May 17th.

THIS treaty was signed, on the part of the provinces, only by the deputies of French Flanders, Artois, and Hainault. The other provinces were not called, as Luxemburg had never concurred in any of the late transactions; and the greatest part of Limburg and Namur had already submitted to the king's authority.

THE prince of Orange, no stranger to the secret motives of the leading men among the Walloons, having

The union of
Utrecht.

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having

^h Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. i.

having foreseen that this agreement would certainly take place; had, in order to provide a counterpoise against it, set on foot a new treaty of alliance among the provinces of Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Guelderland, Friesland, Brabant, and Flanders. This alliance was called the Union of Utrecht, from the place where it was brought to a conclusion. It may justly be considered as the first foundation of the republic of the United Provinces. It is still regarded as containing the fundamental laws of the constitution, and proves its author, by the wisdom, moderation, and extensive views which it discovers. It contains neither any avowal, nor any express renunciation of their allegiance to Philip; but the provinces tacitly assume to themselves the sovereign authority, and lodge it partly in the general assembly of the States, and partly in the States of the several provinces. The principal articles of this confederacy are those which follow: "That the several provinces contracting, unite themselves together in one political body, renouncing for ever the power of separating from each other; but reserving each to itself all the rights which it possessed before.

"THAT the said provinces shall assist each other to repel the attacks of any foreign power; and, in particular, to repel whatever violence may be offered to any of the contracting parties, in the name of the king of Spain, under the pretext of establishing the catholic religion, or on account of any transaction in the Netherlands, since the year 1558; leaving it always to the generality of the union to determine in what proportion each province shall be obliged to furnish its supplies, either of money, or of troops.

"THAT in Holland and Zealand, no religion but that which is already established shall be openly professed; and that the other provinces shall be at liberty to allow either of the protestant religion, or the catholic, or both, as they themselves shall judge expedient:

expedient : that restitution shall be made of the effects which belong to the convents and churches, in all the provinces except those of Holland and Zealand ; and in these, that pensions shall be appointed to the popish ecclesiastics, to be paid them wheresoever they reside.

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“ THAT all frontier, and other towns, which the general and provincial States shall think proper to fortify, shall be fortified at the joint expence of the generality, and of the particular province in which they lie ; but if the General States shall on any occasion think proper to build new forts, without the consent of the particular province in which they lie, the generality shall furnish the whole expence.

“ THAT all fortified towns shall be obliged to receive such garrisons as the generality shall appoint, on condition that the troops shall, besides their oath of allegiance to the General States, take a particular oath to the province and town in which they are stationed.

“ THAT the General States shall not conclude any peace or truce, nor undertake any war, nor impose any taxes, without the consent of the majority of all the provinces and towns of the union ; and that on the other hand, no town or province shall enter into any alliance with any foreign prince or power, without consent of the generality.

“ THAT in case any prince or state shall incline to accede to this alliance, he may be admitted, with the consent of all the members of the confederacy.

“ THAT all the male inhabitants of the provinces, from the age of eighteen to that of sixty, shall, in a month after the publication of the present treaty, inscribe their names in a register to be laid before the General States at their first assembly, to assist them in judging what forces each province is able to furnish.

“THAT in order to procure the money necessary for the support of the forces, all the taxes shall be farmed out publicly, to those who shall make the highest offer; and lastly, that the said taxes shall be heightened or lowered according as the General States shall judge the exigencies of the confederacy to require.”

THIS confederacy was not immediately attended with those advantages which it was designed and calculated to produce. It behoved the religious parties to experience, for some time longer, the mischievous effects of their intemperate zeal and bigotry, before they could live at peace. In several places, the people were still agitated by the most violent animosity against one another. In Bois-le-duc, the protestants and papists took arms, and coming to blows, had several hundreds of their number killed. Soon after this, the protestants, being seized with a sudden panic, abandoned the town to their enemies, who immediately submitted to the Spaniards.

Violence of
the protest-
ants.

IN Antwerp, where the protestant party was the most powerful, the people insulted the popish ecclesiastics, when employed in one of the solemn processions of their religion; and in spite of Matthias and the prince of Orange, who interposed their authority to protect them, they obliged them to leave the city.

Count Eg-
mont's at-
tempt on
Brussels.

THESE violences, which the reformers, impelled by their religious zeal, exercised in Antwerp and other places, served only more easily to reconcile the catholics to the Spanish government; and contributed not a little to make several of the nobility forsake the party of the States. Among these was count Egmont, son of the great, unfortunate count Egmont. This young nobleman had hitherto distinguished himself by his zeal against the Spaniards; but resolving now to make his peace with them, he attempted, with a regiment of Walloons, to render himself master of Brussels, in order to

to deliver it to Farnese; and he succeeded so far in his design, as to get possession of one of the gates, and introduce his troops into the city. The citizens ran instantly to arms; and, being joined by some regular forces in the service of the States, they quickly recovered the gate by a singular stratagem. Having driven violently towards it, some waggons loaded with hay and straw, they set fire to these combustible materials, and the wind blowing the flame and smoke towards count Egmont's soldiers, they were soon obliged to betake themselves to flight. The whole inhabitants had, in the mean time, got under arms, and Egmont, with the rest of his men, was shut up in the market place, hemmed in on every side, and without any prospect of deliverance. There they remained during that day and the night following; neither of the two parties being inclined to begin hostilities. The citizens meanwhile indulged their resentment, by reproaching the count with his treachery, in forsaking those who had taken arms to revenge his father's death; calling out to him, that only eleven years before, on the same day of the year, and in the very place where he then stood, his father had died a martyr for that cause, which *he* now wanted so basely to betray. This bitter remembrance drew tears from the young man's eyes. The people were moved with that compassion for the son, which they owed to the memory of the father, and consented to suffer him and his troops to leave the town¹.

DURING the course of these transactions, conferences for reconciling the Netherlands to Philip were held in the city of Cologne, at the request and under the mediation of the emperor, the pope, and the electors of Treves and Cologne. The pope sent thither Castagna, archbishop of Rossano, who afterwards attained the papal dignity, and assumed the name of Urban VII. The chief of the emperor's embassy

Conferences
for peace at
Cologne.

¹ Grotius, p. 64. Meteren, book ix. p. 250.

embassy was count Schwartzenburg. Philip named the duke de Terra Nuova for his ambassador, and the duke d'Arſchot was at the head of the deputies from the States. From this nomination of persons of ſo great eminence and diſtinction, ſuperficial obſervers were apt to imagine, that the negociation committed to them could not fail to be brought to the deſired concluſion. But this was not the judgment of perſons of greater penetration. They conſidered, not only that the prince of Orange, and the other popular leaders, by whom the States were governed, had already gone too far to expect forgivenefs from the unrelenting temper of the king; but that the opinions of the reformers were more widely diffuſed, and their zeal, if poſſible, more ardent than ever. And as there was no reaſon to believe that they would ever be perſuaded to abandon their religion, ſo there was little ground to hope that Philip's bigotry would ſuffer him to agree to any terms of peace, whiſt they adhered to it. It was in reality this cauſe chiefly, by which the preſent negociation, as well as all preceding ones, was fruſtrated. Philip acted on this occaſion with his uſual duplicity, and gave private inſtructions to his ambaffador, of a very different import from thoſe which had been communicated to the emperor*. At firſt, he ſeemed willing to ratify the pacification of Ghent; and by one of the articles of that treaty, religion was to remain on its preſent footing, till a general aſſembly of the States ſhould alter it. But in the courſe of the conferences it appeared, that the re-eſtabliſhment of popery was a condition, without which he would agree to no accommodation. Neither would he conſent to the convoking of the aſſembly of the States, nor to the ratifying of the election of Matthias; and he ſtill inſiſted peremptorily, that all cities, forts, and military ſtores, ſhould be immediately delivered into the hands of the prince of Parma. In a word, the

terms

* Strada, lib. v.

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terms offered on this occasion were, in every material article, the same with those which had been formerly rejected by the provinces of Holland and Zealand, when they stood alone, and unsupported by the other provinces; and therefore it is difficult to suppose that Philip could, from the beginning, have intended any thing by the present negotiation, but to gratify the pope and emperor, at whose desire it was begun.

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BEFORE the dissolution of this congress, however, he humbled himself so far as to make private offers to the prince of Orange. These were, the payment of his debts, the restitution of his estates, a compensation for the losses which he had sustained during the war, and the liberty of his son the count of Buren, upon whom, if the prince himself should incline to retire into Germany, the king promised to bestow the government of Holland and Utrecht. These offers were made in Philip's name by count Schwartzburg, who pledged his faith for the strict performance of them. William could not but be flattered with the testimony which was thus given, by an enemy so great and powerful, of the dread that was entertained of his abilities. But being superior to the allurements of interest, he preferred the glory of saving from slavery a people who confided in his integrity, to all the advantages which he or his family could have derived from the favour or forgiveness of the king. "He would listen to no proposal," he said, "that related to himself only. He was conscious, that in all his conduct, he had been animated by a disinterested affection towards the public good; and no consideration would induce him to enter into any agreement, from which the States and people were excluded: but if *their* just claims were satisfied, he would not reject any terms for himself, which his conscience and honour would suffer him to accept¹.

Philip attempts to gain over the prince of Orange.

SOON

¹ Reidanus, p. 29. Grotius, p. 66.

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Dissolution
of the con-
gress.

SOON after this, the congress was dissolved ; and no other effect was produced by it, except that the duke d'Arschot, and some other deputies of the States, embraced the opportunity, with which it furnished them, of reconciling themselves to the king.

THE negotiations for peace did not entirely interrupt the operations of the war. By the assistance of the catholic inhabitants, the prince of Parma acquired possession of Mechlin; and some time afterwards of Villebroek. These losses were compensated to the States, by some acquisitions which their forces made under the count of Renneberg; who, besides reducing the province of Friesland, made himself master of Deventer and Groningen. In the southern provinces, the Flemings and Walloons were engaged in perpetual hostilities against one another, but no exploit was performed by either party, sufficiently interesting and important to deserve to be recorded.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

BOOK XVI.

DURING the course of the preceding transactions in the Netherlands, Philip was assiduously employed in preparing to assert his claim to the kingdom of Portugal, an object fitted to inflame a more moderate ambition than that of Philip, and worthy of all the attention and expence which he bestowed in acquiring it. Under a succession of kings, who placed their glory in promoting commerce among their subjects, and in making discoveries in the remotest regions of the globe, the Portuguese had attained a degree of consideration among the European nations, from which the narrow limits of the kingdom, and the neighbourhood of the Spanish monarchy, seemed for ever to exclude them. Besides establishing settlements in Africa, and the adjacent islands, they had doubled the Cape of Good Hope, which no European mariners had ever attempted, and had penetrated boldly into almost every corner of the great eastern ocean, discovering lands till then unknown,

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State of
Portugal.

B o o k
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known, and founding cities, with a view to the advancement of their trade. And not satisfied with their acquisitions in the east, they had turned their arms towards America, and planted in Brasil, that valuable colony, of which they still retain possession.

Don Sebastian.

JOHN the third, the last of those great kings under whose government the Portuguese performed such mighty achievements, died several years before the present period, leaving his throne to Sebastian, his grandson, who was then only three years old. This young prince gave early indications of many splendid accomplishments, which excited in the minds of the Portuguese the most sanguine hopes of a prosperous and happy reign; but unfortunately for himself, as well as for his people, he was animated with the most chimerical ambition, which led him not to imitate the example of his illustrious ancestors, by studying to promote the true happiness of his subjects, but prompted him to extend his dominions, in order to propagate the Romish faith.

His romantic
ambition.

THIS passion was cherished in him by Don Alexis de Menezes, his governor, and Lewis de Camarra, a jesuit, his tutor or instructor; the former of whom was perpetually celebrating the praises of his predecessors, on account of their victories over the Moors in Africa and the Indies; while the latter impressed his young mind with a persuasion, that it was the first duty of a Christian king, and the most acceptable service which he could perform to the Deity, to extend the knowledge of the true religion. By these means, his ambition was inflamed to a degree of madness; and, in order to accomplish that design which appeared so meritorious and honourable, he once resolved to sail with a fleet and army to India; nor could his courtiers persuade him to relinquish that romantic project, till they proposed that, in place of

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of it, he should undertake an expedition against the Mahometans in Africa. From this enterprise likewise his wisest counsellors laboured with much solicitude to divert him; but their exhortations proved ineffectual. Sebastian adhered to his purpose with inflexible obstinacy, and exerted himself with great activity, in making preparations for carrying it into execution.

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IN the midst of these preparations an opportunity presented itself, which he considered as a declaration of Heaven in favour of his design. On the death of Abdalla, king of Morocco, his son, Muley Mahomet, had seized upon the crown, in contradiction to an established law of succession, that the kingdom shall devolve to the brother of the deceased king. A civil war ensued, and Mahomet, after having lost several pitched battles, was compelled to leave his uncle, Muley-Moluc, a prince of great abilities and virtues, in possession of the throne. After attempting in vain to engage Philip to espouse his cause, Mahomet applied to Sebastian, and offered, if he would reinstate him in his dominions, to put certain towns into his hands, and to become tributary to the crown of Portugal.

State of
Morocco.

SEBASTIAN listened to these offers with the utmost pleasure, and readily engaged to pass over himself to Africa with a fleet and army.

Sebastian resolves to invade Morocco.

To enable him to fulfil this engagement, he solicited assistance in troops from his uncle the king of Spain, from some Italian powers, and (which shews how anxious he was to insure success) from the prince of Orange.

IN answer to the application which he made to Philip, that monarch proposed an interview with him, in the town of Guadaloupe in Castile. Sebastian agreed to this proposal; and the Spanish historians relate, that, in the interview which was held

held

held soon afterwards, Philip endeavoured to dissuade him from his intended enterprise; but that, having found him inflexible, he promised, before they parted, to assist him with fifty galleys and five thousand men. They add, that not long after, Philip, dreading that the great number of Turks in the service of Muley-Moluc, might reduce Morocco under the dominion of the Sultan, made an offer of his friendship to that prince, who, being likewise under apprehensions of danger from the Turks, gladly accepted of it, and entered into the proposed alliance. The same historians inform us, that about this time Philip obtained, through the intercession of the Venetians, a truce of three years from the Sultan; and that he was prompted to humble himself so far, as thus to treat with the inveterate enemies of Christianity, (which he had never vouchsafed to do before) by the anxiety which he entertained with regard to the transactions in the Netherlands^a.

THE prince of Orange was not less anxious concerning the issue of these transactions, yet his conduct was extremely different from that of Philip; whether it proceeded from his native magnanimity, joined with a desire of giving proof, in the sight of all Europe, of the strength of the confederated provinces, or from the hopes of securing Sebastian's friendship to the confederacy in some future period; by whichever of these motives William was influenced on this occasion, he gave the kindest reception to Da Costa, the Portuguese ambassador, and afterwards sent three thousand Germans to the assistance of Sebastian^b.

His army.

THESE troops, with ten thousand Portuguese, and some Italians and Spaniards that were sent him by Philip, notwithstanding his late treaty with Muley-Moluc, made up an army of fifteen thousand men. With this army, and a great number of pioneers, Sebastian set sail from Portugal, in the

^a Ferreras, vol. x. p. 306. 312.

^b Thuanus.

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the beginning of summer 1578, and landed them all safe at Arzile and Tangiers, where he was joined by Mahomet, the exiled king, with a body of Moorish troops.

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He arrives
in Morocco.

MULEY-MOLUC, having received early intelligence of his design, had endeavoured to divert him from it, by offering him certain territories adjacent to those sea-coast towns in Africa which belonged to the crown of Portugal. This heroic prince had been the more solicitous to prevent Sebastian's invasion, because he laboured under an inveterate disease, which he believed would soon prove mortal; and he was desirous to leave his dominions in peace to his brother, whom he considered as his rightful heir. But when he found Sebastian deaf to his proposal, he had exerted all his native vigour in preparing for his defence, and had drawn together an army consisting of more than sixty thousand horse and foot.

Muley-
Moluc.

WITH this army he advanced towards the enemy, and when he had arrived within a few miles of their camp, as he doubted the fidelity of a part of his troops who had formerly been attached to the interest of his nephew, he published a proclamation, giving liberty to all, who should incline, to pass over to the Portuguese. But few of them embraced this opportunity which was offered them. His magnanimity, and other virtues, had overcome their attachment to Mahomet, and determined them faithfully to support their present sovereign.

SEBASTIAN was earnestly entreated by his most experienced officers, and by Mahomet, who was greatly discouraged at seeing so small a desertion from his uncle's army, to keep within his intrenchments, near the sea-coast, and not to expose his troops to the risk of a battle; but that obstinate, imprudent prince rejected with disdain this wholesome counsel, because he thought that it favoured of timidity, and not only led out his army from

Imprudence
of Sebastian.

from the camp which he had fortified, but marched into the centre of the country to meet the enemy.

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MOLUC's distemper, in the mean time, had made the most rapid progress; yet the strength of his mind was unabated. If he had not dreaded the quick approach of death, he would have been satisfied with cutting off Sebastian's communication with his ships, and as the Portuguese were badly furnished with provisions, have brought the war to a conclusion without fighting; but he dreaded the effect which his death might produce upon his troops, and therefore resolved to bring on, as soon as possible, a general engagement. Sebastian's rashness rendered it easy for him to execute this resolution. Without regard to the great superiority of Moluc's forces, that infatuated prince ventured to advance into an open country, where the whole Moorish army, horse as well as foot, could be employed. Moluc improved, with great dexterity, the advantage which was thus afforded him. Having drawn up his army in the form of a half-moon, he went in his litter through all the ranks, exhorting his troops to remember, that their religion and liberty were at stake; and assuring them, that whatever pretext Sebastian had offered to justify his present unprovoked invasion, his real design was, to reduce the Moors to slavery, and to extirpate their religion. Then, after he had given all the instructions which he thought necessary to ensure success, finding his strength almost quite spent, he committed the command of the army to his brother, and retired to a little distance from the field.

Battle of Al-
cazar.

THE battle was begun with a furious discharge of the artillery; but the two armies came soon to close fight, and the Portuguese infantry repulsed the Moors in different places with great slaughter. In the mean time the Moorish cavalry, amounting to thirty thousand, having wheeled round from both

both wings, had inclosed the enemy on every quarter; immediately after which, they attacked them on the flanks, and in the rear, while they were pursuing the advantage which they had gained over the Moorish infantry. By the Portuguese horse, a body of the Moors were repulsed, and driven towards the place to which Moluc had retired. Fired with indignation at the sight, he threw himself out of his litter, and having got on horseback, by the assistance of his attendants, he rallied his flying troops, and was about to lead them back to the field of battle. But by this exertion the small remains of his strength were entirely exhausted. His officers seeing him unable to support himself on his horse, carried him to his litter, where he fainted, and only recovered to desire that those about him would keep his death secret, till the battle should be decided; immediately after which, putting his finger on his mouth, as a further injunction of secrecy, he expired.

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Death of
Muley-Mo-
luc.

A MORE striking display of strength of mind occurs not in the annals of history. Moluc was besides endued with every amiable and respectable accomplishment, being no less conspicuous for justice and generosity, and (which are rare endowments in a native of Africa) integrity and candour, than for prudence, vigour, magnanimity, and fortitude. By his bravery and conduct he delivered his kingdom from the oppression of a tyrannical usurper; and if he had lived, he would have advanced it to a degree of prosperity and glory to which it has never attained.

His charac-
ter.

His troops remained under a persuasion, that he was still a witness of their behaviour. Great numbers of them fell. The Portuguese, the Spaniards, and Germans, fought with the most undaunted intrepidity; but the horse being driven upon the foot, broke their ranks, and threw them into confusion. The Moorish cavalry then pressed forward

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forward in thousands on every side, and made dreadful havock among them, till almost all of them were either slain or taken prisoners.

SEBASTIAN himself, who still survived the fatal catastrophe, had, in the arrangement of his troops, and in the beginning of the engagement, acted the part of an expert commander; and he gave afterwards many conspicuous proofs of the most heroic valour, flying from rank to rank, encouraging and exhorting his troops; exposing himself to every danger; and often mingling sword in hand with the thickest of the enemy. Having had three horses killed under him, and his standard-bearer slain, his soldiers, in the confusion of battle, mistook another standard for his, which they flocked round, and left their king almost alone. The Moors called out to him, that if he would surrender, they would spare his life; "But you cannot," he replied, "preserve my honour." Then accompanied only by the count of Vimioso, Christopher Tavora, and Nunno de Mascaregnas, he threw himself into the midst of the enemy, and fought desperately, till Vimioso and Tavora fell by his side, and he himself, breathless and exhausted, and unable any longer to wield his sword, was seized, and disarmed by the surrounding Moors.

Death of Sebastian.

THESE men quarrelled with one another concerning their royal prisoner, and from words they had recourse to arms; when a Moorish officer coming up, put an end to the dispute, by discharging a furious stroke of his sabre on the head of the king.

IN this manner perished the brave, but rash Sebastian; whose fate affords a striking instance of the pernicious tendency of courage and ambition,

* This account of Sebastian's death rests entirely on the testimony of Don Nunno de Mascaregnas, who was an eye-witness; nor did de Thou think there was any reason for calling it in question; though some other authors insinuate, that Sebastian laid violent hands upon himself.

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tion, when they are not tempered with prudence and moderation. About eight thousand of his troops were killed, and all the rest, except a few who escaped to Arzile and Tangiers, were reduced to slavery. Of the nobility, the greatest part were slain; and several of the most illustrious families in Portugal became extinct^b.

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DON HENRY, grand uncle of Sebastian, a cardinal and a priest, succeeded to the throne; but being of a weak and sickly constitution, and far advanced in years, there was little probability, either that he would live long, or that he would leave any issue behind him: and his short reign served only to give the several pretenders to his kingdom an opportunity of preparing to assert their claims to the succession.

Don Henry,
king of
Portugal.

THE candidates were seven in number: the dutchefs of Braganza, the king of Spain, the duke of Savoy, Don Antonio prior of Crato, the duke of Parma, Catherine of Medicis, and the sovereign pontiff.

Candidates
for the suc-
cession.

THE four first were grand-children of Emanuel the Great, father of Henry. The dutchefs of Braganza was daughter of prince Edward, Emanuel's second son; Philip was son of the empress Isabella, his eldest daughter; the duke of Savoy, of Beatrix his younger daughter; and Don Antonio was a natural son of Lewis, who was a younger son of Emanuel, and brother to the present king. The duke of Parma was great grandson of Emanuel, by a daughter of the above-mentioned prince Edward. The queen-mother of France founded her claim on her supposed descent from Alphonso III. who died about three hundred years before the present period; and the pope pretended that Portugal was feudatory to the see of Rome, and belonged to him, since

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the

^b Mahomet, the exiled king, was drowned in attempting to make his escape; and Hamet, Muley-Moluc's brother, succeeded to the throne of Fez and Morocco.

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the male-heirs in the direct line were extinct. Gregory had conceived a violent desire to make his natural son a king, and he had once flattered himself with the hopes of making him king of Ireland, through the assistance of Philip. But as it is inconceivable how he could ever expect to persuade Philip to quit *his* claim, so nothing but folly or dotage could have determined him to prosecute his own, in opposition to so powerful an antagonist.

THE pretensions of Catherine of Medicis, and her hopes of success, if she ever entertained any, were not less chimerical than those of the pope. It can hardly be believed, that this political princess could, in her present competition, have any other end in view, but to obstruct the ambitious designs of Philip, and to furnish the court of France with a pretence for opposing him.

FROM the dukes of Savoy and Parma, Philip knew that he should not meet with opposition; since, besides that his claim was better founded than theirs, these princes were in close alliance with him, and depended much upon his support and protection. Could Don Antonio have proved his mother's marriage, his right to the throne would have been unquestionable. He attempted to prove it, but in vain. Still, however, he persisted in his purpose, and with some address and great activity, he gained over a considerable party among the people. Most of the nobility, on the other hand, and the king himself, who knew the vanity of Antonio's pretensions to legitimacy, were inclined to support the claim of the dutchess of Braganza^e; whose right, they thought, was clearly preferable to that of Philip, not only because she was descended from Emanuel by a male, and Philip by a female; but because an ancient and fundamental law required, that the crown should not be inherited by a stranger.

PHILIP'S

^e The duke of Braganza himself was sprung, though not in a direct line, from the royal blood.

PHILIP's agents at the court of Lisbon allowed, that if the dutchefs of Braganza's father had been alive, his title would have been indisputable; but they maintained, that since he had died without attaining possession of the throne, nothing but the degree of consanguinity to Emanuel ought to be regarded; and that as the dutchefs and he were equal in that respect, the preference was due to a male before a female. And they farther insisted, that the law which excludes strangers from inheriting the crown, was not applicable to *him*, since Portugal had formerly belonged to the kings of Castile.

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Philip's title

BESIDES these considerations, which had very little weight, except with those who were for other reasons inclined to espouse Philip's interest, the duke de Ossuna, his ambassador, endeavoured to impress the scrupulous and timid mind of Henry with a persuasion, that, in opposition to so powerful a competitor as the king of Spain, it would be impossible for the duke of Braganza to maintain possession of the throne; and that the fruits of all the glorious discoveries and conquests which had been made by his father and brother would be lost, and the kingdom itself involved in the calamities of war.

HENRY's desire to prevent these unhappy consequences, determined him to proceed with great deliberation in examining the pleas of the contending parties. He consulted civilians in different parts of Europe, and called a convention of the States of the kingdom, to give him their opinion with respect to the measures proper to be pursued. The members of the convention differed widely in their sentiments from each other, and while some of them advised him, without delay, to nominate for his successor whichsoever of the competitors he thought fit, others exhorted him deliberately to examine the several claims that had been offered. In compliance with this last advice the candidates were cited to appear;

Don Henry
discusses the
claims of the
competitors.

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Henry's de-
liberations.

and they all sent commissioners, who pleaded the cause of the princes whom they represented, before Henry, as they would have pleaded any ordinary point of right before a civil judge.

THIS extraordinary trial, in which so great attention seemed to be paid to justice, was suited to the feeble and irresolute character, as well as to the habits of the king, who had spent his life in listening to the idle disputes of theologians. But his conduct was severely censured by all men of prudence and understanding. They considered that the fate of kingdoms can almost never be decided by the forms or principles of law; and they regarded this farcical trial, not only as useless for the purpose which was intended, but as calculated to divide the kingdom into factions, which must sooner or later produce a civil war.

His impru-
dence.

HE ought in the beginning, it was said, to have declared himself in favour of the dutchess of Braganza, whose right, according to the most common and obvious law of succession, was unquestionable; and who, besides, was much more acceptable to the nation, than any other of the candidates. He ought, after this, to have caused her right to be recognised by the convention of the States, who would cheerfully have consented to acknowledge it; he ought to have required an oath of allegiance to her, in the event of his own demise, from the army, and all persons in public offices; and then, instead of losing his valuable time in consulting and deliberating, he ought to have employed it, in putting the kingdom into a posture of defence against the king of Spain.

BUT Henry was incapable of forming any resolution that required so much courage, vigour, and activity. He was no less attached to the dutchess of Braganza, and no less averse from Philip, than his nobility and people; yet he still continued to hesitate between them with as much deliberation as if he had expected to live for many years.

IN order to extricate himself from this perplexity, Henry began to think seriously of a proposal, which had been made to him by some of his counsellors, to marry; and accordingly, notwithstanding his great age, his infirmities, and his having borne so long the character of a priest, he sent an ambassador to solicit a dispensation from the pope. There was little probability of his living to fulfil his intention, and much less of his leaving any issue behind him; yet Philip, being greatly alarmed at his design, sent Ferdinand de Castello, a Dominican friar, to dissuade him from it, by reminding him of the offence which his marriage would give to all true catholics, and the triumph it would afford to the Lutherans, and other sectaries of the age: and when Henry refused to admit Castello to an audience, a circumstance that furnished Philip with a stronger proof of Henry's alienation from him, than any which he had hitherto received, he employed all his interest at Rome, to prevent the pope from granting the dispensation.

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IN the mean time he spared no pains to conciliate the favour of the principal nobility; and having spread his emissaries over the kingdom, he published a manifesto, in vindication of his title, calling upon the people to turn their eyes towards *him*, as the only person who would have a right to the throne after the decease of the present king. This manifesto, while it incensed Henry more than ever against him, served in no degree the purpose for which it was designed. The Portuguese entertained the thoughts of falling under the dominion of the Castilians with an hereditary and violent aversion; and there was nothing in the character of Philip by which their prejudice could be overcome.

Philip's manifesto.

If Henry had availed himself of this disposition of his subjects, and acknowledged the duteh of Braganza for his successor, almost the whole kingdom would have concurred to support his claim; and so great a force might have been prepared,

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prepared, as, with the assistance of foreign powers, would have either determined Philip to abandon his design, or have prevented him from carrying it into execution. But as the duke and dutchess of Braganza were deterred from exerting themselves, by their dread of Philip, and the weak irresolute conduct of the king; so Henry still flattered himself with the vain conceit, that Philip, as well as the other competitors, would submit to his decision.

Don Antonio
declared illegitimate.

TOWARDS his nephew, Henry acted with much less hesitation and reserve, than towards the other candidates. Having obtained a bull from the pope, empowering him to judge of Antonio's claim to legitimacy, he examined the witnesses whom Antonio produced to prove his mother's marriage; and, having extorted from two of them a confession of their having been suborned, while the other two contradicted each other in delivering their evidence, Henry, on this foundation, joined with the circumstance of the prior's being mentioned by his father in his latter will as his natural son, passed sentence, declaring him to be illegitimate.

ANTONIO had influence afterwards to persuade the pope to recall his bull, on the pretence of the king's having exceeded his powers. By this treatment Henry was highly exasperated both against the pope and Don Antonio; and he indulged his resentment against the latter, by banishing him first from the court, and afterwards from the kingdom. In obedience to this sentence, Antonio retired for some time into Castile; but he soon returned, and found, that his uncle's conduct towards him had not produced that effect upon the people which Henry had expected. Their attachment to the prior remained as strong as ever; and, as no pains were taken to form a party in the interest of the dutchess of Braganza, great numbers of the people were entirely devoted to him, and regarded him as their only resource against the tyranny of Spain.

FROM

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FROM this disposition of the people, together with the activity which Antonio displayed in augmenting the number of his partizans, Philip perceived that he must not satisfy himself with arguments, manifestos, and private applications to individuals, but must resolve to support his claim by force of arms. Agreeably to this resolution, he issued orders for levying troops in Spain, Italy, and Germany; and gave instructions to the marquis de Santa Croce to hold the fleet in readiness for action. He was aware how much reason he had to expect opposition from several of the European powers; and, in order to prevent them from being alarmed, he caused a report to be propagated, that, having entered lately into an alliance with the new king of Morocco, his present military preparations were intended for an expedition which he had agreed to undertake, in conjunction with that monarch, against Algiers. This pretext served the purpose which he designed; and neither the king of France, nor the queen of England, nor any Italian or German prince, seemed to attend to his operations.

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Philip's military preparations.

IN the mean time Henry's health declined daily, and all about him perceived that his death was fast approaching. He appeared now more desirous than ever to have his successor fixed; and having for this purpose summoned the States to meet at Almerin, he seems to have resolved to declare himself either in favour of the king of Spain, or the dutchess of Braganza, according as he should find the one or the other of these competitors most acceptable to the States. But the members of this assembly could not agree. Most of the nobility and ecclesiastics had, by different means, been gained over to the interest of Philip, while the deputies of the cities were animated with the most irreconcilable aversion to his person and government.

IN

BOOK
XVI.

1580.
Death of
Henry, Jan.
31st, 1580.

IN the midst of their deliberations and disputes the king died, leaving the nomination of his successor to five persons, to whom he committed the regency of the kingdom.

THE first act of the administration of the regents was to send ambassadors to Philip, to dissuade him from having recourse to arms, till, according to the will of the late king, they should deliver their judgment concerning his right to the succession. But to this request, Philip, whose preparations were now complete, gave the following reply: "That his right was clear and indisputable; that he would not submit it either to the regents, or to the States, and that he did not desire to have any judgment whatever passed in confirmation of it."

By this answer the regents were thrown into great perplexity. A majority of them stood well affected towards Philip, but they were prevented from declaring in his favour, by their dread of the indignation of the people, and were obliged to issue orders for equipping the fleet, and strengthening the fortifications and garrisons of the frontier towns. But the great exertion which had been made lately by Sebastian, and the exhausted state to which the kingdom had been reduced, by the numberless expeditions to India and America, from which no fruit had been yet derived, sufficient to compensate either for the expence which they had cost, or the loss of men which they had occasioned, rendered it impossible for the regents, if they had been ever so much inclined, to secure the kingdom against so great a force as the Spanish monarch had prepared.

Philip's fleet
and army.

HIS army, including four thousand pioneers, amounted to thirty-five thousand men, and his fleet consisted of thirty men of war, seventeen frigates, and seventy galleys and ships of burden loaded with provisions and military stores. It was
not

not likely that so great a fleet and army would find employment in subduing a kingdom so ill prepared for defence, and so much weakened by intestine divisions, as Portugal at the present period. But, besides that Philip was, from natural temper, generally cautious to excess in his military enterprises, it should seem that, in the present case, he regarded the importance of the prize more than the difficulty of attaining it; unless it be supposed, that he still had reason to apprehend that the French and English would interpose.

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HE gave the command of the fleet to the marquis of Santa Croce, who was reckoned the ablest naval officer in Spain. But he hesitated for some time with regard to the person whom he should place at the head of his land forces. His hesitation, however, did not proceed from any doubt which he entertained with regard to the merit and abilities of his generals. For the duke of Alva was still alive; whom Philip knew to be possessed of every qualification requisite to secure the success of his intended enterprise.

Commanded
by Santa
Croce,

ALVA, upon his return from the Netherlands, had been admitted by Philip to the same degree of favour and confidence which he had formerly enjoyed. But his son, Don Garcia de Toledo, having debauched one of the maids of honour, under a promise of marriage, Philip had put him under arrest, and given orders that he should not be released till he should consent to fulfil his engagement: notwithstanding which, his father had assisted him in making his escape; and, in order effectually to disappoint the king's intention, had concluded a marriage between him and his cousin, a daughter of the marquis of Villena.

and the duke
of Alva.

PHILIP, highly provoked with this contempt of his authority, had banished the duke from court, and confined him to the castle of Uzeda. Alva bore this indignity with extreme impatience, and persuaded the pope, and some other foreign princes,

to

to employ their intercession in his behalf; but all his applications for forgiveness had hitherto been ineffectual, and he had remained almost two years in confinement. This severity, exercised, for so small an offence, towards an old friend and servant, in the decline of life, was by some ascribed to Philip's imperious temper, and his implacable resentment; whilst others said, that he had been long disgusted with Alva's arrogance; and that the duke's conduct in the affair of his son, was only a pretence which Philip made use of, to justify himself for dismissing from his presence a man whose temper and manners were become intolerable.

To whichever of these motives Philip's treatment of Alva could be ascribed, it was expected, that neither his pride, nor his natural suspicion and distrust, would have suffered him to commit the charge of an enterprize of so great importance as the present, to one towards whom he had shewn himself so inexorable; and it excited great surprise, when he sent two of his secretaries to the duke, to inquire whether his health would permit him to undertake the command of the army which he had prepared for the conquest of Portugal. To this inquiry, Alva, without hesitation, replied, that he was ready to devote the little health and strength that were left him to the service of the king, and immediately afterwards he set out for Barajas to receive his instructions. He desired liberty to pay his respects to Philip at Madrid. But so ungracious was this prince even towards such of his ministers as he esteemed the most, and so incapable of entirely forgiving any offence or injury, that he refused to grant him admittance into his presence; and, having transmitted his instructions to him at Barajas, he ordered him to join the army as soon as possible. Those who remembered the barbarous cruelty which Alva had exercised in the Netherlands, were not sorry for the mortification which he suffered on the present occasion; but they could not withhold the
tribute

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tribute of applause which was due to him, on account of that inflexible fidelity so becoming in a subject towards his sovereign, which determined him, in the extremity of old age, to expose himself to all the hazards and hardships of war, in order to advance the interest of a prince by whom he had been treated so ungratefully.

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FROM Barajas, Alva went, as soon as he had received his instructions, to join the troops, which were assembled at Badajoz; and soon afterwards he began his march towards Elvas and Olivença. These, and all the other towns which lie north from the Tagus, as far as Setubal, on the western coast, though extremely averse to the Spanish government, yet being utterly unprepared for resistance, opened their gates, and proclaimed Philip for their sovereign.

March of the
Spanish
troops.
June 1580.

THE marquis de Santa Croce, who had set sail with the fleet from Port St. Mary, near Cadiz, found the same facility in reducing Faro, Lagos, and other towns on the coast of Algarva and Antejo; and he came in sight of Setubal, in a few days after the arrival of the land forces at that place.

HITHERTO almost no blood had been shed, and neither the fleet nor army had met with any opposition to retard their progress. The duke of Alva intended next to march without delay to the capital, but it was necessary, he thought, to proceed now with greater circumspection than before, as Don Antonio had drawn together a considerable body of forces, had been admitted into Lisbon, where he was proclaimed king by the people, and had strengthened several of the towns and forts by which the Spanish army must pass in their approach to that city.

Progress of
the Spanish
arms.

THREE ways of reaching Lisbon were proposed in a council of war that was held on this occasion.

One

One of these was to cross the Tagus, some miles above the city, at the towns of Almerin and Santaren; another, to send round the fleet to Almada, and to put the troops on board at that place, which lies almost directly opposite to Lisbon; and the third, to carry the army round by sea from Setubal to Cascaes. The two first of these ways were thought preferable to the last, by most of the officers, because they were safer; yet the last was embraced by the duke of Alva. He acknowledged the justness of what his officers advanced in support of their opinion, but he observed, that, as the fleet was at hand, the army could be immediately put on board; that the passage to Cascaes was not long, and that, as the enemy were ill prepared for their defence, his success would be greatly facilitated by the celerity of his approach.

ALVA was not disappointed in his expectation of the effect which his sudden arrival was calculated to produce upon the Portuguese. They were drawn up along the shore, as if they had intended to dispute his landing; but no sooner had the ships begun to fire upon them, than they retired, and suffered him to land, and put his men in order, without giving him the smallest molestation. They might still have obstructed his approach to Cascaes, as his road thither lay over a hill, defended with a battery of cannon, and full of rugged rocks and brambles, of which Don Diego de Menezes, commander in chief of the Portuguese under Don Antonio, had taken possession with between three and four thousand men. Alva ordered the Spaniards to attack them, without being deterred, either by the strength of the ground, or the number of the enemy. An old experienced officer, of the name of Bariettos, an intimate friend of Alva's, asked him in a whisper, Whether his attempting, with so little precaution, to dislodge an enemy so strongly situated, did not resemble the action of an ardent young warrior, rather than that of an experienced

experienced general? Alva smiled, and replied, That a good general ought on some occasions to employ the prudence and circumspection of old age, and in others, the ardour and confidence of youth. The event shewed that his conduct, though apparently rash, was well adapted to the present circumstances. The Spaniards, inspired with their general's confidence, advanced boldly, and the Portuguese (almost all of whom were raw and undisciplined) retreated, without waiting for their approach.

ALVA laid siege immediately afterwards to the town and castle of Cascaes, and by the briskness of his operations he soon compelled the garrison to surrender. But on this occasion he sullied that renown which his wisdom and vigour would have procured him, by the cruelty which he exercised towards such of the Portuguese as had thrown themselves upon his mercy. In violation of his promise to Don Antonio de Castro, lord of Cascaes, who had joined him upon his first arrival in the kingdom, he gave up the town to be plundered by the Spaniards, and having sent all the soldiers in the garrison to the gallies, he put to death, without any form of trial, Don Diego de Meneses, a nobleman of an illustrious family, and one who, on account of his personal merit, was universally respected and beloved. To this barbarity Alva was prompted by private resentment against Meneses^d; although, it may be presumed, that he would not have ventured to indulge it on the present occasion, if he had not known that his conduct was conformable to the sentiments of the king. It was calculated to inspire the Portuguese with terror, but it served likewise more than ever to alienate their affections; and considering how much superior the Spanish fleet and army were to any force which had been prepared to oppose them, it could not be coloured with the tyrant's ordinary plea of necessity.

FROM

Thuanus, c. lxx. c. x.

FROM the town of Cascaes, Alva led his army against the forts of St. John and Belen, both which he soon reduced to the necessity of surrendering; and being seconded in his operations by the fleet, the example of these places was quickly followed by Almada, and almost all the other fortified places on both sides of the river.

Don Antonio

DURING these transactions Don Antonio, after having, from a consciousness of the weakness of his party, essayed in vain to obtain advantageous terms from Philip, had pitched his camp, with all the forces which he could collect, on the east side of the river of Alcantara, on the road to Lisbon.

ALVA amused him for several days with the hopes of an accommodation, in order to afford time for the operation of a spirit of despondency that prevailed in Antonio's army. Meanwhile he omitted not to procure the most accurate information concerning the situation and strength of his camp; and, on the 25th of August, he resolved to attack it. Before he could approach the entrenchments, it was necessary that he should make himself master of the bridge of Alcantara, or lead his army to a considerable distance up the river, the banks of which were so steep and rugged, as rendered it impossible to transport either horse or foot in sight of the enemy. Having drawn up his main army in order of battle, directly opposite to the Portuguese camp, he sent the horse under his son Ferdinand de Toledo, and two thousand select infantry, under Sancio d'Avila, to cross the river several miles higher, where the banks were practicable, whilst he ordered Colonna, with the Italians, to make an assault upon the bridge.

COLONNA's troops were twice repulsed, but in the third onset, being supported by a body of Germans, which the duke sent to their assistance, they

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they drove the Portuguese before them, and secured possession of the bridge.

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Soon afterwards Toledo and d'Avila appeared. The Portuguese, astonished at the sight of them, and dreading that their communication with the city might be intercepted, threw down their arms after a short resistance, and betook themselves to flight. The Spaniards pursued, and slew between two and three thousand before they could reach the town.

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Defeat of
the Portu-
guese under
Antonio.

DON ANTONIO, who displayed on this occasion neither fortitude nor conduct, had fled with his troops to Lisbon. There he knew that he could not long remain in safety, as, besides the insufficiency of the fortifications, the magistrates, and many of the inhabitants, were disaffected to his interest; and therefore, immediately after releasing all the prisoners in the city (a poor expedient to recruit his ruined army) he set out, attended by the count de Vimioso, and the bishop of la Guarda, two of his most zealous friends and partizans, with a small number of troops, for the town of Santaren.

THE magistrates of Lisbon did not hesitate a moment in resolving to submit to the conqueror, and the town was, immediately after the battle, delivered into his hands. The Portuguese fleet at the same time struck their colours to the marquis de Santa Croce, and received such a number of his Castilians on board as gave him the entire command.

It was now become Philip's interest to provide for the security of Lisbon and its suburbs, as much as for that of any of his towns in Spain; and Alva so far fulfilled his engagement with the magistrates, as to prevent any formidable number of his troops from entering the town; but he gave up the suburbs (which were at that time no less considerable

Cruel treat-
ment of the
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considerable than the town itself*) to be ransacked and plundered, without making any distinction between the friends and enemies of the king. He suffered them likewise to pillage the houses of such of the inhabitants within the town as had discovered any attachment to Don Antonio, and he allowed parties to go out and plunder all the country and villages in the neighbourhood. A Spanish historian says, that the soldiers committed these enormities without the duke's permission, yet no punishment was ever inflicted on them, and no restitution was ever made to the many thousand innocent persons, who were involved in the same common ruin with the guilty.

AFTER a conduct so barbarous and impolitic, there was little reason to expect that the people of Lisbon would be able soon to overcome their aversion to the Spanish government. From their dread of Alva's tyranny they took the oath of allegiance which was prescribed to them; and, from the same motive, they witnessed those public rejoicings which he appointed to be celebrated on account of his success; but being unable to conceal the anguish of their minds, the acclamations which they uttered were feeble and languid, and intermixed with sighs and groans.

THE duke of Alva's joy, soon after his entrance into Lisbon, was interrupted by intelligence which he received from Spain, that Philip had fallen sick, and that his physicians were extremely apprehensive of the issue of his distemper. Alva knew that the king's death, at this crisis, would probably render all his labours and success in Portugal abortive, and therefore he suspended for a while the prosecution of the war.

New preparations of
Don Antonio

IN this interval Don Antonio exerted himself with great activity, and employed every expedient which

* Thuanus, c. lxx. c. x.

which he or his partizans could devise to raise another army, flattering himself with the hope of being able to maintain his ground, till the French, or some other foreign power should be persuaded to espouse his cause. In the town of Santaren he had lately been received by the people as their only rightful sovereign, and every mark of affection and respect had been shewn him; yet so great a change had his defeat and flight produced, that they refused to admit him within the town, till he engaged that he should not remain in it beyond a limited time; and, immediately after his departure, they sent ambassadors to the duke of Alva, with an offer of submission.

FROM Santaren Antonio directed his course northwards, and in the province which lies between the Minho and Douro, he prevailed upon eight or nine thousand of the inhabitants to take up arms. With these tumultuary troops he procured admittance, partly by force and partly by persuasion, first into Aveiro, and afterwards into the city of Oporto; but in both these places he exercised a degree of severity towards those whom he suspected to be his enemies, that was extremely ill calculated to increase the number of his friends.

HE remained at Oporto till he was informed that the duke of Alva, being delivered from his anxiety with regard to the king's health, had sent a part of his forces against him, under Sancio D'Avila, who was advancing towards the banks of the Douro with great rapidity. D'Avila had under his command only five or six thousand horse and foot, and Antonio's army consisted of about nine thousand; but from past experience, the latter was deeply sensible of the difference between his undisciplined forces and those of d'Avila, and he was well acquainted with the character of that general; who, in the Netherlands, and other places, had given the most conspicuous proofs of military skill and intrepidity. His safety he knew depended on

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his preventing the Spaniards from crossing the Douro, which, for many miles above Oporto, was so deep and rapid, that without boats they could not attempt to pass it. He exerted himself therefore with diligence in removing the boats and barks from the south side of the river, and planted his troops at different places on the north side, to watch the motions of the enemy.

Progress of
the Spaniards
under d'Avila.

IN the mean time d'Avila advanced, and took possession of Villanova, a little town which stands opposite to Oporto. From that place he sent a party of his troops in search of boats; who returned without success: but d'Avila being resolved to omit nothing in his power to accomplish his design, sent them back with orders to pursue their march a great way further up the river, which they did accordingly, and collected about twenty boats, from places at so great a distance from Oporto, that Antonio had judged it unnecessary to remove them. Still, however, most of the Spanish officers thought it impracticable to effectuate their passage with so small a number; and it was impossible to bring them down the river, by reason of certain armed vessels which Antonio kept ready to intercept them. To remedy this inconvenience, d'Avila ordered a part of his troops to march up to the place where the boats lay, and there he transported them, without opposition, to the opposite side. These troops had time to intrench themselves, before the enemy received intelligence of their landing; and, under the shelter of their intrenchments, the rest of the forces were immediately carried over in the same way.

Defeat of
Don Antonio.

THIS unexpected success in the beginning of his enterprise, gave d'Avila the highest assurance of victory, and demonstrated how little reason he had to dread the efforts of an enemy, who, on so critical an occasion, had shewn themselves so deficient both in courage and vigilance. Their conduct

duct afterwards was such as their negligence and cowardice, in permitting the Spaniards to land in small bodies, one after another, gave reason to expect. D'Avila drove them before him, till, with very little bloodshed, they were entirely routed and dispersed. This active general lost no time in sending a party of horse in pursuit of Don Antonio, who had fled, accompanied by a small number of his partizans, to Viana, a town on the sea-coast near the northern frontier of the kingdom. Upon the approach of the Spaniards to that place, he attempted to make his escape by sea, but was driven back by a violent storm, which overtook him soon after he had embarked. He then dismissed his attendants, and, disguising himself in the dress of a common sailor, eluded the search of his pursuers. Philip had recourse to his favourite weapon, a proscription, and offered a reward of eighty thousand ducats to any person who should deliver him into his hands. Notwithstanding this, so great was the aversion of the Portuguese towards the Castilian government, or such their attachment to Antonio, that no person was tempted by the proffered reward, either to seize him, or to give information of the place of his retreat. Antonio remained in the country between the Minho and Douro from November till May, living sometimes in the houses of the nobility, and sometimes in monasteries and convents, till he found an opportunity of going by sea to France.

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AFTER the dispersion of the prior's army, all the towns between the Minho and Douro opened their gates, and submitted to the conqueror. The regents appointed by the late king, had some time before declared themselves for Philip; and the duke of Braganza, who seemed to have despaired from the beginning of being able to assert his wife's title to the throne against so potent an antagonist, had taken the same oath of fidelity and allegiance that was required from others.

Entire sub-
jection of
Portugal;

HISTORY OF THE REIGN, &c.

THE colonies in America, Africa, and the Indies, which belonged to the crown of Portugal, quickly followed the example of the mother-country; nor did Philip find employment for his arms in any part of the Portuguese dominions but the Azores, where Antonio's agents had persuaded the people to proclaim him king. Some troops which were sent against them under an officer of the name of Valdes, were defeated by the governor of Angra. In the following year Antonio obtained from the court of France, a fleet of sixty ships, with about six thousand troops, which he landed on one of the isles called St. Michael; but the marquis of Santa Croce coming upon him with a fleet and army much superior to his, obtained a decisive victory over the French both by sea and land, and afterwards reduced all the inhabitants to a state of entire subjection and obedience ^f.

THE success of Philip's arms, and the great accession of dominion which he had thereby acquired, occasioned much anxiety to the neighbouring powers; and excited in the Dutch and Flemings the most alarming apprehensions. They had with infinite difficulty withstood his efforts, while he was employed in the pursuit of that plan of conquest which he had now carried into execution; and they seemed, at this time, to have much greater reason than ever to dread that they should soon be obliged to submit to whatever terms of peace he should be pleased to prescribe. Yet, as will appear in the sequel, Philip's acquisition of the Portuguese dominions in India served rather to expose him to the assaults of his revolted subjects, than to furnish him with the means of subduing them, and contributed more than any other event to that wealth and greatness which they afterwards attained ^g.

THE

^f Antonio escaped, and once more returned to France, and the marquis de Santa Croce treated all his French prisoners as pirates, because war had not been declared between France and Spain.

^g Thuani hist. sui temp. ann. 1579-80. Cabrera, l. xiii. Ferreras, part xv. &c.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

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WHILE Philip's arms were employed in subduing the Portuguese, the prince of Parma had little room for the exertion of that activity and enterprize by which he was so eminently distinguished. Having, according to his late agreement with the southern provinces, dismissed his Spanish and Italian forces, he had thereby weakened his army so much, as to render it unable to keep the field. The States of these provinces had laboured in vain to fulfil their part of the agreement. Their finances were exhausted, all their levies were carried on slowly, and their cavalry were so few in number, that they had been obliged to consent that Farnese should retain some of the foreign horse for his body-guard.

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State of af-
fairs in the
Netherlands

It was fortunate for him, that at this juncture the confederates were in a similar state of weakness. After the departure of their auxiliaries, only a small number of troops remained; and, after the

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the revolt of so many of the nobility, and the death of the count de Bossut, which happened about this time, there was scarcely a single officer, a native of the Netherlands, whom they could intrust with the chief command. Matthias, a young man of no experience, bore the name, but was incapable of discharging the duties of governor. The whole weight of the administration lay upon the prince of Orange, who was involved in an endless maze of the most intricate political negotiations; and without his continual presence, activity, and vigilance, the weak frame of the confederacy would quickly have fallen to pieces. William was therefore obliged to leave the direction of military affairs to the count of Renneberg, La Noue, and Norris; and although these men were not deficient either in spirit and intrepidity, or in prudence and good conduct, yet they neither had forces sufficient to undertake any important enterprise, nor means to support such as were under their command^a.

THE greatest part of Brabant and Flanders had acceded to the union of Utrecht; but the strength of the confederacy was not proportioned to its extent. The union of the several members was not sufficiently compact, the administration was not properly ascertained, and there was no common centre of power and authority established. The troops were scattered in small bodies throughout the provinces; no adequate provision was made for their pay; they lived at free quarters on the inhabitants; and, as luxury is the constant attendant of licentiousness, the country was miserably oppressed and plundered, and the people reduced to an incapacity of furnishing the necessary contributions and supplies. In this situation many persons lamented that they had not embraced the opportunity lately afforded them, of making their peace with the king; and they began to accuse the prince of

^a Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. i.

of Orange who had advised them to reject the conditions that had been offered, of having preferred his private interest to that of the provinces. A spirit of discontent prevailed every where, except in Holland and Zealand, and it was generally believed, that they must soon either make their peace with the king of Spain, or elect some other sovereign, who was able to deliver them from the calamities with which they were overwhelmed.

THE prince of Orange was at this time in Ghent, employed in quieting the disturbances above mentioned. At the desire of the States he published a vindication of his conduct, together with his sentiments concerning the causes of that distress in which the provinces were involved, and the means of their deliverance. As what he said on this occasion, and some weeks afterwards, in the assembly of the States at Antwerp, contains an interesting view of the situation of the Netherlands at the present period, it will not be improper to lay before the reader an abstract of the principal particulars.

The causes of
their distress.

HE began with complaining of the injustice of those by whom he had been accused of having contributed to render ineffectual the late negotiation of peace at Cologne. "For no person in the Netherlands, he said, had greater reason than himself to wish for peace, since without it he could never hope to obtain either the liberty of his son, whom he had not seen for many years, or the recovery of the many rich inheritances which he had lost, or the power of passing the remainder of his life, which now began to decline, free from labour and anxiety. But while for these reasons, joined with compassion for the miseries of the people, no person could more ardently desire to have an end put to the war, he could not help regarding war, with all its calamities, as infinitely preferable to the proffered peace; by one article of which many hundred thousands of the inhabitants would have been driven into exile; and by another,

Explained by
the prince of
Orange.

ther, all who remained, exposed to the mercy of the Spaniards, without any security either for their liberty or their lives, but the promises of those by whom the most solemn oaths had been often violated. These were not his sentiments only of the peace that had been offered, but the sentiments likewise of the States, and of all the sincere friends of their country; nor could that detraction and calumny in which many persons had of late indulged themselves, be ascribed to any other cause, but the secret machinations of those, who, from selfish views, were desirous of reducing the Netherlands under the Spanish yoke?

“ There was much ground, he acknowledged, for complaining of the irregularities of which the troops had been guilty in some of the provinces; but nothing could be more unjust than to throw the blame on those who were entrusted with the reins of government. The governors of states ought to be judged of sometimes by the orders which they issued, and not by the success with which their measures were accompanied; for what could it avail to interpose their authority, when they wanted power to enforce obedience? The disregard shewn by many, to the orders of the States and council, was the principal source of the evils complained of. In all the provinces, except Holland and Zealand, there was scarcely a single town that would admit the garrisons appointed for its defence. To this was to be ascribed that facility with which the enemy had made themselves masters of Allost, and other places; and it was owing to the same cause, that the troops were so much scattered throughout the provinces; the consequence of which was, that the inhabitants of the country and of the open towns, suffering equally from the forces of the States that lived at free quarters upon them, and from the incursions of the enemy, were totally disabled from contributing their share of the public expences. Thus there was no fund sufficient for the regular payment

ment of the troops ; without which, it was in vain to expect either that they could be kept under proper discipline, or employed successfully in any important enterprize.

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“ To remedy the abuses complained of, the most effectual method was to place numerous garrisons in the frontier towns. For if this were done, the great number of small garrisons would become unnecessary ; and the interior parts of the provinces being thereby delivered both from the oppressions of their friends and the devastations of the enemy, the people would be more able to furnish their proportion of the supplies, the troops would be paid more regularly, and discipline more easily maintained.

“ THE States ought not however to stop there, but to exert themselves strenuously in drawing together such an army of regular forces, as might face the enemy in the field, or at least disturb and interrupt their operations. It was their want of such an army that had occasioned the loss of Maestricht ; and, if care were not taken to supply that want, there was ground to apprehend, that the confederacy would soon be stript of all the towns in the inland provinces. But in order to carry this, or any other expedient into execution, it was necessary that, instead of suffering each town or province to dispose of its troops and contributions as it thought fit, a senate or council should be established, with authority to determine every thing relative to the application of the public funds and the conduct of the war.

“ HE was far from intending that this council should be invested with the power either of imposing taxes or of enacting laws. He meant only that it should be empowered to levy such taxes as were imposed, and to execute such laws as were enacted, by the general States of the union. That it should not be subject to be controuled by particular towns

or

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or provinces; nor obliged, in applying the public money, distributing garrisons, and regulating the motions of the troops, to have recourse on every emergency to the States; but should have such a degree of discretionary power conferred upon it, as would enable it to seize the opportunities of action when they offered, and to conduct the operations of the war with secrecy and dispatch."

William exhorts the confederates to renounce their allegiance.

BESIDES these and some other points of less importance, William ventured, both in the writing which he published, and afterwards in the assembly of the States, to explain his sentiments concerning another subject, which he had long revolved, and concerning which he had sounded the inclinations of many of the deputies. Having, before the present period, despaired that peace could ever be restored between the king and the confederated provinces, he exhorted the deputies to consider, whether they were not now in a situation which required that, renouncing their allegiance to Philip, they should transfer it to some other prince, who was able and willing to defend them.

His reasons.

IN the eyes of the greater part of Europe, this proposal appeared in the highest degree audacious. Philip had, ever since his accession, been considered as the most powerful prince of the age; he had lately received an immense increase of power by the acquisition of Portugal, and men could not doubt that the revolted provinces must soon yield to his superior arms, and bitterly repent of the offence which they had given him.

REASONS however were not wanting to shew, that the measure proposed was the best which the people of the Netherlands could embrace in their present circumstances. If they could have entertained the prospect of obtaining peace on tolerable terms, it might be difficult perhaps entirely to vindicate their conduct. The evils which accompany a change of government, are generally so great, and the

the obligation to maintain the present, so strong and powerful, that nothing but the most urgent necessity can ever justify a people for shaking off their allegiance to their legal prince. But, from the issue of the late negotiations at Cologne, it was manifest, not only that Philip was unalterably fixed in his purpose to govern the Netherlands with despotic authority, in contradiction to their fundamental rights and laws; but that the utter extirpation of the protestants, who were now become the most considerable part of the people, was a condition, without which he was determined never to be reconciled. Desolation therefore, and slavery, must have been the certain consequences of peace, and no greater evils could be apprehended from a continuance of the war. “ Even allowing (said the prince of Orange, in the assembly of the States) that the king should be persuaded, by any mediating power, to grant us such conditions as our consciences would suffer us to accept, yet what security can we obtain for his fulfilling them? He has, before this time, been set at liberty by the pope from his most sacred obligations. It is an established maxim of Philip and his counsellors, that with heretics, such as we are, no promises or oaths are binding. Although he were of himself inclined to fulfil his engagements, yet the Roman pontiff and the Spanish inquisitors would reclaim, and soon persuade him to alter his intention. It has been said by some, continued William, that he is a prince of a compassionate disposition, and that we may safely rely upon his mercy. Of the truth of this, we can best judge from what we have seen and known. Do the deeds that have been perpetrated by his command, in India, in Italy, or in Granada, authorise us to form this favourable judgment of his character? Has not every corner of the Netherlands been overflowed with the blood of thousands of our countrymen, barbarously butchered by his command? Are not all the neighbouring kingdoms filled with his subjects, who
have

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have been driven from their native land, either to enrich the countries that have afforded them protection, with our trade and manufactures, or to drag out a miserable life in poverty and exile? We know how grievously our late conduct has offended him, and from what we have seen on former occasions, we may judge of the measure of his resentment. He may humble himself so far as to soothe us with the hopes of a more mild administration; but we should remember the discovery which we made lately, when, by the letters that were intercepted, it appeared, that instead of the generous purposes that were pretended, nothing was meant but to employ some of the provinces as instruments of vengeance against the rest."

Opposition of
the catholics

INFLUENCED by these considerations, which shewed that Philip had entirely lost the confidence as well as the affections of his Flemish subjects, a great majority of the deputies were inclined to renounce his authority. Some of the catholic members, however, prompted partly by political principles, and partly by concern for the safety of their religion, had the courage to remonstrate. They expatiated on the greatness of Philip's power, and the danger to which the States would expose themselves, by adding so great an affront to their former provocations. And to their representations on this head they subjoined, that they could not adopt the strong measure that was proposed, consistently with their oath of allegiance; since the king was unquestionably their rightful sovereign, they had all solemnly recognised his right; and the provinces were his inheritance, which he had derived from a long uninterrupted line of illustrious ancestors ^b.

BUT this reasoning had no weight with the prince of Orange, St. Aldegonde, and the other leaders of the protestants. They considered the breach

^b Dentivoglio, part ii. l. i.

breach between Philip and the confederated provinces, as irreparable; and knew, that long before the present period, he was animated against them with the most implacable resentment. "It was too late, they said, to talk of keeping measures with the king; and no part remained to be espoused, but to provide against the effects of his displeasure. Nor was there the smallest reason for those scruples by which the catholic members were disturbed, either with regard to the lawfulness, or the expediency of renouncing their allegiance. Kings were invested with authority, not for their own sakes, but for the interest of the people whom they were appointed to govern. If the rights of princes were to be investigated, they would be found, in most of the kingdoms in Europe, to have been derived from the will of their subjects, who, grown impatient under the injuries of former princes, had taken from *them*, and given to their successors, what they had an undoubted right to bestow. A prince was indeed superior to each individual in a State; but neither his interest, nor his pleasure was to be put in the balance with the security and happiness of the whole. On the contrary, he might be judged, and even punished for his abuse of power, by the supreme council of the nation. If this truth were doubted of in other places, it could not be controverted in the Netherlands; where, till lately, both the name of king, and the measure of obedience which kings commonly require, were utterly unknown. In the Netherlands the engagements between the prince and the people were strictly mutual; and in engagements of this sort, it was a clear and universal maxim, that the infidelity of either of the two contracting parties, absolves the other from the most sacred obligation^c.

THE protestant members, in comparison with whom the catholics were few in number, being thus

Deliberations about electing another sovereign.

^c Meteren, lib. x. and Grotius, p. 70.

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thus confirmed in their purpose of abjuring the dominion of Philip, the assembly proceeded next to consider, whether they should substitute another sovereign in his place, or establish a republican government, upon the plan of that confederacy which was already formed. The latter of these measures would have been embraced by all the deputies; by the protestants, from the conformity between the principles of a commonwealth, and those of their religion; and by the catholics, from their persuasion that such a government would neither be so highly affronting to the king, nor so effectually preclude the hopes of a future reconciliation. But the present feeble state of the United Provinces obliged them to sacrifice their inclination to their preservation and security. From the representation which the prince of Orange made of the disorders that prevailed, together with the view which he exhibited of their strength and resources, they were convinced, that however strenuously they might exert themselves, they would be able to wage only a tedious defensive war; by which their strength would be gradually wasted, till they were at last compelled to accept of such terms of peace as the king should be pleased to prescribe. To have recourse therefore to the assistance of some foreign prince, seemed not only expedient, but necessary; and to engage the prince of whom they should make choice to espouse their cause with greater zeal and sincerity than they had hitherto experienced in their allies, they resolved to confer upon him the sovereignty of the provinces, with all the prerogatives which had been enjoyed by the princes of the house of Burgundy.

Motives for
choosing the
duke of An-
jou.

NOTHING now remained but to fix upon the person to whom the offer of this high dignity should be made. The prince of Orange, having beforehand sounded the inclinations of the emperor and other German princes, had found them utterly averse from taking any concern in the affairs

affairs of the Netherlands. The queen of England, and the duke of Anjou, brother to the king of France, were the only princes at that time in Europe, between whom the States thought there was ground to hesitate; and they were determined to concur in giving the preference to Anjou, by the prince of Orange; who, besides representing to them the necessity of electing a sovereign who would reside in the country, informed them that their making choice of the duke, would be highly acceptable to the queen. "For she had writ to him on the subject, and given him assurances of granting the States her assistance, in case the sovereignty were conferred on one with whom she had so much reason to expect to live on amicable terms ^d."

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FROM this it should seem, that William had offered to employ his influence in favour of Elizabeth; and it may be presumed, that unless he had found her averse to his proposal, neither he nor the other protestant leaders would have been inclined to give the preference to Anjou. Very different motives indeed were assigned for the prince's conduct, by his enemies. His principality of Orange, they observed, lay in the centre of France. He had lately married Charlotte de Bourbon, of the blood royal of that kingdom^e. For many years he had maintained an intimate correspondence with the leaders of the Hugonots; and he flattered himself with the hopes of enjoying the entire direction of the duke of Anjou, a weak prince, who would probably be more attentive to his pleasures, than to the affairs of government. These interested considerations, it is likely, were not entirely without their influence; but the other circumstance above mentioned seems to afford a still more satisfactory account, since there was in reality no room for hesitation between Elizabeth and Anjou; and Elizabeth, as will appear in the sequel, would certainly have rejected the sovereignty,

^d Meteren, lib. x. ^e Daughter of the duke de Montpensier.

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reignty, in case an offer of it had been made to her. This political princess expected to derive advantage from that animosity which the election of Anjou was likely to produce between the courts of France and Spain. And the prince of Orange knew, that as it would be easier to reconcile the catholics in the United Provinces to the election of a prince of the same religion with themselves, than to that of a protestant; so, without making such a choice, there was little probability that he should ever prevail on the Walloons to accede to the confederacy. Whatever were William's motives, a great majority of the deputies entered readily into his opinion, and they would have proceeded instantly to the election, if it had not been deemed a matter of too much consequence to be decided without consulting their constituents.

La Noue
taken pri-
soner.

IN the mean time the operations of the war were not wholly discontinued, although neither of the two contending parties was in a condition at this period to make any great or vigorous exertion. By means of a stratagem conducted by count Egmont, Farnese acquired possession of Courtray in Flanders, as he did by the like means of some other places. On the other hand, count Egmont and his brother were taken prisoners by La Noue in the town of Ninove: and not long afterwards La Noue himself lost his liberty. This gallant officer having been attacked unexpectedly by the marquis de Roubais, commander in chief of the Walloon forces, was overpowered by numbers, and obliged, through the disadvantage of his ground, to surrender himself a prisoner of war. The States were sensibly affected by the loss of a person of such uncommon abilities, and they offered to give in exchange for him count Egmont and the baron de Selles, who had been taken prisoner at Bouchain. But the prince of Parma refused to consent to this exchange, and said, that he would never agree to give one lion for two sheep. La Noue was conducted to the castle of Limburg, where

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where he remained long; and, during his confinement, employed himself in writing those military and political discourses which were afterwards published, and much admired by his contemporaries. Count Egmont's relations, and those of de Selles, solicited Philip with great importunity to consent to the exchange proposed. But this prince, who never hearkened to the voice of gratitude or compassion where his interest interfered, declined complying with their request; and, rather than yield to the enemy so great an advantage as the recovery of La Noue, he chose to leave his friends to languish in prison for several years.

THESE two noblemen bore this indignity with extreme impatience. De Selles, conscious of having exerted himself with the most fervent zeal in detaching the Walloons from the revolted provinces, fell a sacrifice to the indignation and chagrin which the king's ingratitude and his own unfortunate situation were calculated to inspire. The same causes produced a different, but no less melancholy effect, on count Egmont, whom they deprived of the use of his understanding. Through the tender assiduous care of his sister, whom the States permitted to attend him, he recovered from this distress. But Philip still declined consenting to the exchange, till the year 1584, when La Noue engaged in the strictest manner never to bear arms against him in the Netherlands; and the king of Navarre, the duke of Lorraine, and others, became sureties for his fulfilling this engagement. It is difficult to determine whether Philip's conduct afforded on this occasion a more striking proof of pusillanimity or ingratitude, while no stronger testimony could have been given of the extraordinary merit of La Noue, and the dread which his enemies entertained of his abilities^f.

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ABOUT

^f Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. i. Reidanus, lib. ii. p. 39. and Meteren.

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Defection of
count Ren-
neberg.

ABOUT the time when La Noue was taken prisoner, the confederacy sustained another loss by the defection of count Renneberg. This young nobleman having been appointed governor of Friesland by the States, had subdued the cities of Deventer and Groningen, besides several other places of considerable consequence; and his zeal and services were the more highly valued, as all his relations adhered to the Spanish interest, and he himself was of the catholic persuasion. But these circumstances which gave him so much merit in the eyes of his countrymen, were the means by which he was enticed to abandon the cause which he had hitherto so illustriously supported. The prince of Parma readily perceived the advantage which they afforded for gaining him over from the confederates; and, with this view, he employed the count's sister and her husband, the baron de Monceaux, to offer him the following terms of accommodation: That he should be confirmed in the government of Friesland, and have that of Overijssel annexed to it; that twenty thousand crowns should be immediately paid him, besides an annual pension of twenty thousand florins; that a town, of which he was feudal superior, should be erected into a marquisate; and that he should have two regiments of troops to be distributed throughout his governments, in whatever stations he should think fit. Besides these enticements, another object was held forth to him, more tempting perhaps than any of the rest; he was flattered with the hopes of obtaining in marriage the countess of Megen, of whom he was greatly enamoured, and who possessed one of the richest fortunes in the Netherlands. His religious principles conspired with these allurements, and made him lend an open ear to his sister's repeated representations of the danger to which the catholic faith was exposed, and of the designs formed by the prince of Orange for its destruction. He hesitated how-
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ever for some time, and trembled at the thoughts of the infamy in which he was about to be involved; but at last he consented to accept of the terms proposed, resolving to conceal his having done so, till he should take proper measures for delivering the towns and forts into the hands of the Spaniards.

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HIS design could not however entirely escape the penetrating eye of the prince of Orange. Various circumstances concurred to alarm William's apprehensions, which made him resolve, without delay, to prevent, if possible, the fatal effects of his intended treachery. He instantly went into Friesland, under the pretence of quelling some disturbances in that country, and ordered some officers to draw their troops together, and lead them against Lewarden, Harlingen, and Staveren. These orders were executed with secrecy and dispatch, and all the three places were wrested out of the hands of those to whom count Renneberg had committed them.

THE count, who resided at this time in Groningen, was thunderstruck when he received intelligence of this disaster, which at once shewed him that his perfidy was detected, and put it in a great measure out of his power to fulfil his engagements to the prince of Parma. Still, however, he was either not prepared, or he had not courage, to throw off the mask. He complained loudly of the affront that had been offered him, and of the ingratitude with which his services had been repaid. Among the officers who witnessed his confusion on this occasion, there were two to whom, as he knew their fidelity to the States to be inviolable, he had not communicated his designs. These men, thinking it still practicable to preserve him in his duty, exhorted him to go immediately to the prince of Orange, in order to clear himself from the suspicions which were entertained against him. "This is the only expedient in your power, said

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one of them, if you are conscious of innocence; nor can I doubt that you are, when I consider, that by persisting to act the part which your duty and honour require, you must promote your interest more effectually, than by violating these sacred obligations, and involving your name in perpetual infamy." Renneberg listened attentively to this discourse, changed colour frequently, and at last burst into tears. He repeated his complaints of the treatment which he had met with, but he would not explain his intentions, nor comply with his friend's advice. The two officers then left him; and, after acquainting the chief magistrate of what had passed, they withdrew privately from the city.

By a popular and insinuating behaviour, accompanied with strong asseverations of the falsehood of the reports which had been propagated, Renneberg laid asleep the suspicions both of the magistrates and the people, till the plot which he had formed was ripe for execution. Having brought in secretly a body of troops, which he concealed in the palace, and put arms into the hands of his domestics; with these, and the catholic inhabitants devoted to the Spanish interest, he overpowered the garrison; and having thus made himself master of the town, he proclaimed himself governor, in the name of Philip, and then mounted the fortifications with the troops which he had introduced.

Renneberg's
remorse and
death.

BUT he did not long enjoy any of the advantages which he expected to derive from his revolt, and some of them he never attained. The money promised him was never paid, and the counts of Megen was given in marriage to another. His health being impaired by the fatigues which he had undergone in his military enterprises, the remembrance of his treachery filled his mind with anguish and remorse, which preyed upon his sickly

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ly frame, and carried him off in the prime of his age, lamented even by those whom he had betrayed, who felt for his misfortunes, on account of his many amiable accomplishments &c.

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THE losses which the confederacy suffered from La Noue's imprisonment, and the infidelity of Renneberg, served only to confirm them in their resolution of conferring the sovereignty on some foreign prince; and the reasons above mentioned, joined to the influence of the prince of Orange, determined the States of the several provinces and towns to give the preference to the duke of Anjou.

Election of Anjou.

The election was made accordingly in due form by the General States, and a solemn embassy sent to give intimation of it to the duke, who readily accepted the offer, and consented to all the conditions annexed to it. They were contained in a treaty signed by him and the ambassadors of the States at Pleffi-les-Tours, on the 29th of September; and the principal articles were those which follow: "That the States of the United Provinces having elected Francis de Valois, duke of Alençon and Anjou, for their sovereign, did thereby confer upon him all the titles and prerogatives which their former princes had enjoyed. That in case the duke should die without issue, the States might elect another sovereign, and that the Netherlands should in no event be annexed to the crown of France. That in case the duke should die leaving several sons behind him, the States should have power to determine which of them should succeed him in the sovereignty, and that if the prince whom they should make choice of were under age, they might assume the government into their own hands till he should arrive at the age of twenty. That the duke should maintain inviolate, all the rights and privileges of the people; that he should summon the general assembly of the States to meet at least once a year; and that, if he should fail

The conditions of it.

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fail to issue letters of convocation, they should themselves have power, agreeably to ancient form and custom, to meet together as often as they should judge expedient. That the duke should fix his residence in the Low Countries; but if his affairs should, on any occasion, call him thence, he should nominate for governor some nobleman a native of the Netherlands, with the consent and approbation of the States. That all his counselors should be natives of the provinces, except two or three of the French nation, who might be admitted into the council, provided the States should give their consent. That he should make no innovation in religion, but afford his protection equally to the protestants and catholics. That Holland and Zealand should, both in respect of government and religion, remain in their present state, being obliged, however, to contribute their proportion of the supplies requisite for the support of the confederacy. That the duke should spare no pains to engage his brother the king of France to assist him in carrying on the war; that he should accede to all the treaties that subsist between the States and foreign powers, and should not himself form any new alliance without their consent. That all foreign soldiers should be dismissed on the first requisition of the States: And lastly, That if the duke should fail in performing any of the foregoing conditions, his right to the sovereignty should cease, and the provinces be no longer bound to yield obedience to his authority."

As this treaty was negotiated in France, Philip complained to Henry of his breach of friendship in permitting it; and Henry affected to be much offended with his brother's conduct, but in reality he did not feel that displeasure which he pretended. On the contrary he secretly rejoiced in the prospect of being delivered from a brother, whose levity and caprice had given him much inquietude; and

and it is said, that he assured the States privately, that he would send them either troops or money, as soon as the troubles of his kingdom were composed.

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BUT whatever reason Philip had to be offended with the French monarch, he was much more highly incensed against the prince of Orange, whom he considered as the contriver, as well as the chief promoter of the revolution that had taken place. Having often than once attempted, by negotiation and artifice, to free himself from an enemy, who had furnished employment to his ablest generals and best disciplined forces for so many years, he had recourse, on this occasion, to the ignoble expedient of exciting some wretch or desperado to make an attempt upon his life. For this purpose he published an edict of proscription against him, in which he accused him of having excited and fomented that spirit of discord, which had proved the source of so much misery to the Netherlands; interdicted all the subjects of the crown of Spain from holding communication with him, and from supplying him with bread, or drink, or fire; and offered to any person, who should deliver him dead or alive, or take away his life, the sum of twenty-five thousand crowns, besides making him and his associates noble, if they were not already noble, and granting them a full pardon of all crimes, however enormous, of which they had been guilty.

Philip's proscription of the prince of Orange.

THIS practice of commanding assassination, almost unheard-of since the days of the Roman triumvirate, was suitable to the dark, revengeful, and ungenerous nature of Philip. The prince of Orange could have retaliated the injury; but he scorned so ignoble a revenge, and chose rather to rest his defence on an appeal to the world for his integrity.

HIS Vindication or Apology, addressed to the assembly of the States, and of which he sent copies to the several courts in Europe, is one of the most precious monuments of history. It contains an interesting relation of many particulars, which throw light, not only on William's own character and that of Philip, but likewise on the characters of several of the other principal actors in the Netherlands. The author has, in some parts of it, indulged himself in the language of keen resentment, and ventured to assert boldly several facts, of which the coteremporary historians have spoken with reserve. Some allowance perhaps must be made for that just indignation with which he was inflamed; but when it is considered, that no person had better access to information; that no prince possessed a higher character for sincerity and truth, having never, in a single instance, been convicted by his numerous enemies of insincerity and falsehood; that the relation of the facts which he asserts was published at the time when they are said to have happened, and when it was easy for the persons accused, if accused unjustly, to have confuted him; that their interest and honour called loudly for a confutation; and yet, that no such confutation, nor any vindication of their characters, which had been arraigned as odious at the bar of the universe, was ever attempted. When all these circumstances are duly considered, there does not appear any sufficient reason for calling in question the facts contained in this Apology, although some of them are of such a nature as to require the strongest evidence to justify the reader for yielding his assent ^b.

Adopted by
the States.

THE conduct of the confederated States on this occasion was such as William had reason to expect. After employing several days in examining his Apology,

^b An abstract of this Apology is subjoined to the conclusion of this work.

Apology, they voted him an affectionate address, in which they attested the falsehood of those imputations on which Philip had founded his proscription. They declared, that as the prince had been regularly elected into the several offices which he held, so he had never accepted of any office but in consequence of their most earnest entreaties. They prayed him still to exercise the authority with which they had invested him, expressed their gratitude for his many eminent services to the commonwealth, and promised to yield a ready and cheerful obedience to his commands. They concluded with expressing their anxiety for his life, and made him an offer of maintaining a company of horseguards, of which they intreated him to accept, being persuaded that on his preservation their own security depended.

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IN a few days afterwards they gave him another proof of that zeal and sincerity with which they had espoused his cause. Their election of the duke of Anjou was a virtual renunciation of their allegiance to their former sovereign; yet all public acts ran as before in the name of Philip and that of the States; the oath administered to persons entering upon public offices had not been altered, and the people in some of those cities in the confederacy, which had consented to Anjou's election, were extremely averse to alter it; from that attachment which men often discover to exterior forms, even after the institutions on which they were originally founded have been abolished; but the States, sensible at last of the incongruity between these forms and the steps which they had lately taken, and apprehensive of danger from leaving it in any respect ambiguous to whom the people owed their allegiance, agreed now to remove all ground of ambiguity by a solemn abjuration of Philip as their sovereign.

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Solemn renunciation
of their allegiance to
Philip.

AN act of abjuration was accordingly passed, with great unanimity, in an assembly held on purpose at the Hague, consisting of deputies from Brabant, Guelderland, Zutphen, Flanders, Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Overijssel, and Friesland. In this act, after enumerating the principal grievances which had prompted them to form their present resolution, they declared it to be a right inherent in every free people, to withdraw their allegiance from a prince who obstinately refuses to fulfil the duty which he owes them; and much more from one who violates the fundamental laws, and acts the part of a tyrant and oppressor. They pronounced Philip to have forfeited for ever all authority in the Netherlands. They forbade all judges and others to use his name, arms, or seal; and they required the magistrates of towns, and all other persons in public offices, to bind themselves by an oath to oppose him and his adherents to the utmost of their power.

THESE resolutions were carried into immediate execution. All Philip's seals were broken, all commissions and letters patent in his name were cancelled, and the new oath was administered to every person who possessed any civil or military employment. It was not without difficulty that the magistrates in some towns were persuaded to take this oath. Some remaining scruples of conscience, arising from a regard to their former oaths, gave uneasiness to several; and others doubted of the expediency of so strong a measure at the present crisis, on account of the ships and merchandise belonging to the people of the Netherlands, which were in the ports of Spain. But no pains were spared to remove these objections, and at last almost the whole inhabitants of the above mentioned provinces entered into the views of the States,

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States, and took the oath that was prescribed them ⁱ.

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ABOUT this time Matthias left the Netherlands, after having resided there between three and four years, without having acquired either reputation to himself, or any advantage to the people whom he had been called to govern. He had employed all his influence to persuade the States to make choice of him for their sovereign; but the motives above explained having determined them to give the preference to the duke of Anjou, it should seem that the prince of Orange had been able to satisfy Matthias as to the necessity of that measure, since he remained in the country for a considerable time afterwards, and accepted of an annual pension of fifty thousand guilders from the States ^k.

DURING the course of these civil and political transactions, the troops were not wholly unemployed. In Friesland, the king's forces were commanded by Schinch and Verdugo, between whom and colonel Norris and count Hohenloe several sharp rencounters passed, with various success; but the only important event which happened at this time in the northern provinces, was the acquisition of Breda, into which the Spaniards were treacherously admitted in the night by some of the garrison, whom the agents of the prince of Parma had found means to corrupt ^l.

THE

ⁱ Upon a representation of the prince of Orange, the States formed at this time several useful regulations relative to the administration of justice, to the finances, and the troops. That council of state likewise was established, of the necessity of which William had laboured to convince them, which was instituted partly to remedy the inconveniencies arising from the slowness, with which the deliberations of the State were unavoidably conducted, and partly to serve as a check upon the future sovereign. Grotius An. l. iii. Meteren, &c.

^k Matthias had afterwards a better fortune. His brother resigned to him the kingdom of Hungary in 1608, and that of Bohemia in 1611, and the year following he obtained the Imperial crown. Strada, lib. vii. Meteren, p. 317.

^l Meteren, p. 313.

THE prince himself was, in the mean time, intent on the reduction of Cambray. But not having a sufficient number of troops to carry on the siege with vigour, he was obliged to convert it into a blockade. D'Inchi, the governor, had recourse for relief to the duke of Anjou, and was warmly seconded in his application by the States and the prince of Orange. Anjou perceiving how deeply his honour was concerned to gratify this first desire of his new subjects, published at the court of France his intention of attempting to raise the siege. This was no sooner known, than a great number of the nobility flocked from all parts of the kingdom, to his standard. With their assistance, he collected in a few days an army of near twelve thousand foot and four thousand horse, and marched directly towards Cambray. The prince of Parma, too prudent to contend with an army, which, besides being greatly superior to his own in number, was conducted by a brave and warlike nobility, quitted his intrenchments and retired. In this manner was Cambray delivered, after it had been blockaded for several months, during which the inhabitants had been reduced to great distress. Anjou having brought along with him an ample supply of provisions, it was immediately introduced; and soon after, he made a magnificent entry into the city, amidst the applauses of the people, who saluted him, the Protector of their Liberty. He then laid siege to Chatteau-Cambresis, and quickly compelled the garrison to surrender^m.

THIS success which attended Anjou's first enterprise afforded inexpressible pleasure to the confederated provinces, and served to heighten their expectations of his future government. He was earnestly intreated by the States to improve the present opportunity, and to advance with his army towards Flanders. But it was not in his power,
he

^m Meteren, p. 315. Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. ii.

he told them, to comply with their request. All his troops but a few were volunteers, who had engaged in his service only for a short time, and for the single purpose of the relief of Cambray. He could not prevail upon them to remain with him much longer ; and he had not yet provided money for their pay. But he hoped to return soon with a powerful army ; and he would in the mean time employ his utmost influence to interest his brother and the queen of England in their cause.

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THERE were not wanting powerful motives to induce the French king to grant Anjou that assistance for which he now applied ; since, besides being delivered from the fickle, restless spirit of a brother, who had greatly increased the troubles of his reign, he would have thereby avenged himself on Philip, who had secretly undertaken the protection of the catholic league, which, as will be afterwards related, had been lately formed by the duke of Guise, on pretence of providing for the security of the catholic religion, but in reality to controul the sovereign's authority. But Henry was not in a condition at this time to make an open breach with Philip. By his indolence and voluptuousness, added to the numberless calamities in which his kingdom was involved, his finances were exceedingly reduced ; and the king of Navarre on the one hand, and the duke of Guise on the other, furnished more than sufficient employment to all the policy and power which he possessed. Promises therefore of future aid were all that Anjou could obtain from him, and this disappointment determined the duke to set out immediately for England, where it should seem he had better ground to hope for assistance than in his native country.

Anjou solicits aid from his brother.

ELIZABETH

ELIZABETH had for some time past appeared to lend a favourable ear to a proposal of marriage which he had made to her; and his expectations were at present raised to the greatest height. On his arrival in England, she gave him the most gracious reception. Soon afterwards, she ordered her ministers to prepare the marriage contract; and, in the presence of many witnesses, after a long discourse with him apart, she took a ring from her own finger, and put it upon his; which both the spectators and the duke interpreted as a declaration of her consent. It is impossible to believe with some historians, that Elizabeth meant only to amuse Anjou, and thereby to advance some political design. It is inconceivable how any design whatever could be promoted by carrying her dissimulation to so great a length. This wise princess, notwithstanding the many extraordinary accomplishments which adorned her character, was not exempt from the weaknesses that are peculiarly incident to her sex. Flattered by the court which Anjou had long assiduously paid her, she appears to have entertained the most partial sentiments of affection towards him, and seriously to have intended to listen to his proposal. But at last her prudence, her ambition, and that love of independence which she had cherished through her whole life, prevailed over the temporary passion into which she had been betrayed. She made an apology to Anjou, for her change of resolution, and gave him the strongest assurances of assistance and support in his new dominions. The marriage was no more mentioned, and the duke, after a stay of three months in England, set sail for the Low Countries; escorted by a fleet, on board which there

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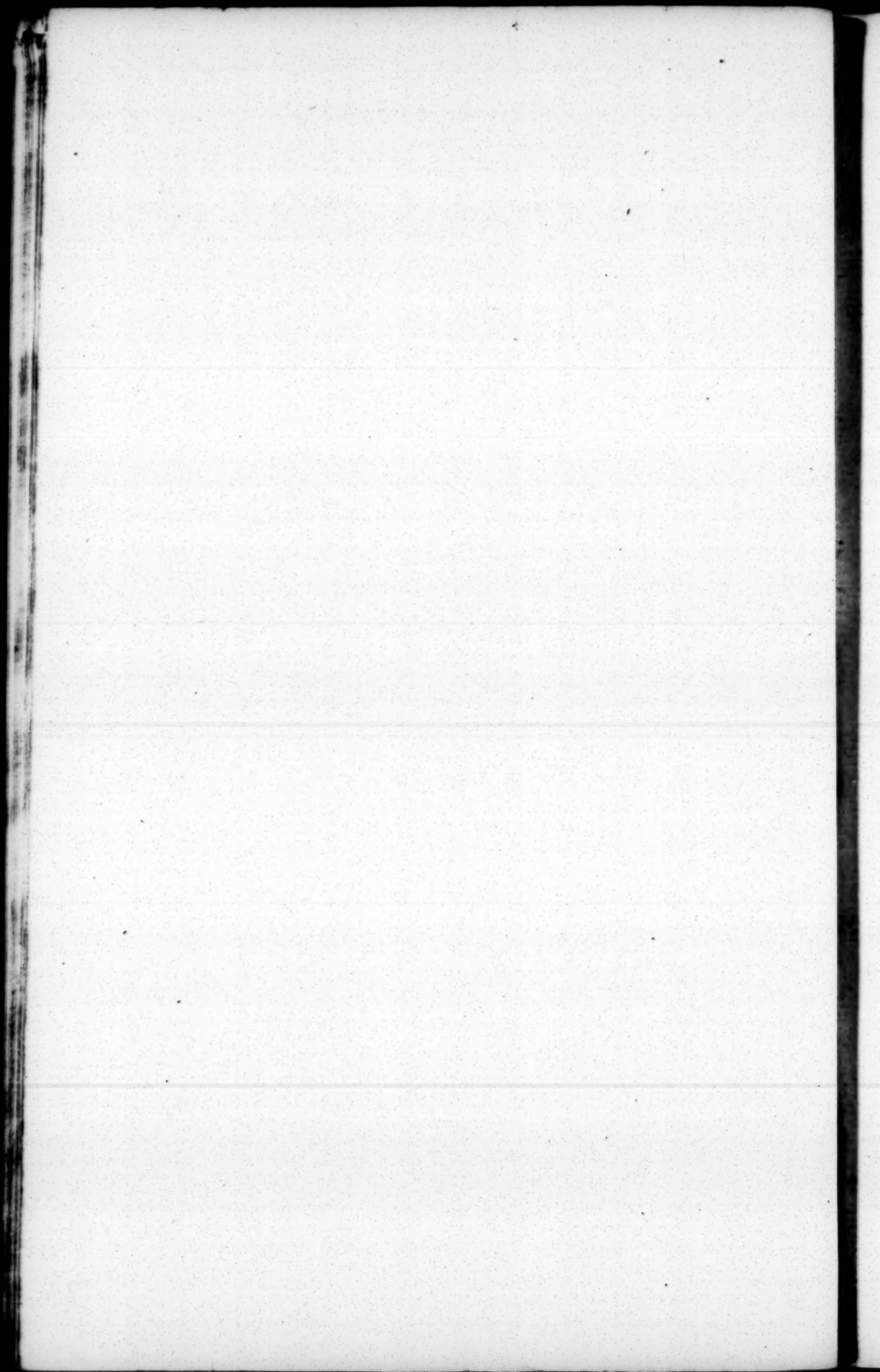
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there was a great number of nobility and gentry, whom the queen had desired to attend him, as a proof to his new subjects, that although the intended marriage had not taken place, yet she was deeply interested in his prosperity.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
KING OF SPAIN.

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AFTER a passage of three days, the duke of Anjou landed on the 10th of February, at Flushing. From Flushing he went to Middleburgh, and was conducted from thence by a fleet of fifty ships of war to Antwerp. The banks of the Scheld, the entrance into the town, and the streets which led to the palace, were lined by the citizens, to the number of twenty thousand in arms; and no expence was saved, which a wealthy commercial city could afford, to express their attachment and respect. After having taken the usual oath to maintain their rights and privileges, he received from the States the oath of allegiance; and then entered upon the sovereignty, while all around him wore a face of happiness and joy.

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Anjou's arrival in the
Netherlands.

IN Antwerp, the public exercise of the catholic religion had for some time past been prohibited. But now, in order to gratify the new sovereign, it was permitted in one of the churches; and all

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catholics were allowed to worship there, according to the rites of their religion, upon condition that they should abjure the king of Spain, and swear allegiance to the duke. Only a few accepted of this indulgence, while the greater part chose rather to forego the privilege held forth to them, than so solemnly to renounce their former sovereign. On this occasion the States, as well as the duke, were not a little alarmed; and thought it necessary without delay to provide against the danger that might arise from persons who gave so clear a discovery of their disaffection to the present establishment. They first published *one* edict, imposing a fine of 200 guilders on those who should decline taking the oaths; and soon afterwards another, by which the recusants were banished from the Netherlands^a.

Attempt to
assassinate
the prince of
Orange.

IN the midst of these transactions, that joy which Anjou's arrival had diffused throughout the provinces was interrupted, by an attempt which was made, not many days after his inauguration, upon the life of the prince of Orange. The design was first conceived in Spain, by a man of the name of Isonca; and it was suggested by him to Gaspar Anastro, a Spanish banker in Antwerp, of ruined circumstances, as an expedient for retrieving his affairs. To induce Anastro to undertake the execution of the bloody purpose, Isonca sent him a sign-manual of the king, in which Philip engaged to pay him eighty thousand ducats as soon as the assassination should be perpetrated. Anastro had not courage himself to execute so bold and desperate an enterprise, and therefore he communicated Isonca's proposal to John Jauregui, a menial servant in his family, a young Biscayan, of a thoughtful, melancholy disposition.

^a Meteren, p. 325.

disposition, whom he knew to be both trusty and audacious. With this young man Anaastro found there was little need for persuasion. "I am ready," said he, to perform instantly what the king so earnestly desires. I despise equally the proffered reward, and the danger to which I shall be exposed; for I know that I shall die. I only ask that you will assist me with your prayers to God, and employ your interest with the king, to provide for my father in his old age." Jauregui was the better qualified to succeed in his design, as he spoke the German language fluently, and was in no danger of being known to be a Spaniard. He was confirmed in his purpose by a priest of the name of Timmerman; from whom he received absolution of his sins, and the strongest assurances, that by putting to death so great a heretic as the prince of Orange, he would infallibly secure the favour of God and everlasting happiness.

UNDER a full conviction of the truth of what the priest had declared, this deluded wretch set out for the castle, and having taken his station near the door of the apartment in which the prince had dined, he watched the opportunity of his coming out; when stepping up to him, he discharged a pistol at his head, loaded with a single ball. The ball entered a little beneath his right ear, and passing under his palate and upper teeth, came out on the other side. William was deprived for a moment of his senses; which he no sooner recovered, than he desired his attendants to save the life of the assassin. But the guards, transported with sudden rage, had dispatched him. The appearance of the prince's wound, from the effusion of blood, was extremely formidable, and as he was deprived of his speech by the same cause, the spectators believed him to be at the point of death. The news of this disaster spread quickly over the town, and excited in all ranks of men, inexpressible

anguish and despair. The citizens poured in crowds from every quarter to learn the particulars of that calamity which had befallen them; and, as if each individual had lost his own proper parent, as well as the common parent of the state, there was nothing to be heard but the voice of sorrow and lamentation.

IN the midst of this distress, a rumour was propagated, that the French were the authors of the murder, and that it had been perpetrated in order to deliver the duke of Anjou from the restraints which had been imposed on his authority. This report gained easy credit from the people. Their grief was now converted into fury, and they flew to the palace with an intention to execute a speedy vengeance.

IN the mean time it was known at the castle, that the assassin was a Spaniard, from papers found in his pocket, by Maurice, the prince's son^b. Of this discovery, notice was immediately carried to the prince, who had now recovered his speech; and he was informed, at the same time, of the danger to which Anjou and his countrymen were exposed. This intelligence affected William in the most sensible manner; and notwithstanding his present critical situation, he wrote, with his own hand, a billet in exculpation of the French. By this, joined with the pains which were taken by St. Aldegonde, the people were undeceived and pacified. The assassin's body having been exposed to public view, it was soon discovered that he had been a domestic of Anaastro. Anaastro himself had fled, but his secretary, whom he had left behind, to wait the issue of Jauregui's attempt, and Timmerman, the priest, were seized, and having confessed

^b Maurice was at this time only fifteen years of age, but was even then remarkable for his attention and sagacity.

confessed their guilt, they were condemned to suffer death. At the desire of the prince of Orange, who never neglected an opportunity of inculcating humanity upon his countrymen, no tortures were inflicted on them. They were first strangled and then quartered, and their heads and limbs fixed over the gates of the city ^c.

WILLIAM'S recovery was dubious for some time, on account of the difficulty which the physicians found in stopping the effusion of blood; but after all their applications had failed, they made a number of persons succeed one another in pressing the mouth of the wound with their thumbs, without intermission, for the space of several days and nights; and this expedient proved at length successful ^d.

ANASTRO having gone from Antwerp to Tournay, where the prince of Parma then resided, affirmed confidently that William had died of his wound. Farnese too rashly believed him, and wrote letters to the citizens of Antwerp, and other places, exhorting them to return now to their duty, since that person was removed by whom they had been led astray. These letters would not have been calculated, in the present disposition of the people, to promote the prince of Parma's design, even if the information on which he proceeded had been true: but as they did not arrive till after the people were delivered from their apprehensions with regard to William's life, they served only to excite their ridicule and indignation ^e.

MEANWHILE

^c They remained there till the city fell into the hands of the prince of Parma, when they were taken down by the popish ecclesiastics, and buried with every mark of veneration which their superstition could devise.

^d While his life was in danger, a public supplication was offered up to heaven for his recovery; and when it was accomplished, a solemn thanksgiving was celebrated.

^e Bentivoglio, p. 263. Meteren, p. 326. Thuanus, lib. lxxv.

MEANWHILE the operations of the war were not discontinued by either of the contending parties. The States acquired possession of the town of Allost, and the prince of Parma made himself master of Steenwick and Lierres. He was soon after enabled to act with greater vigour than the weakness of his army had hitherto permitted him to exert. Having consented with great reluctance to the dismissal of the Italian and Spanish troops, he had employed all his address to convince the Walloons that it was in vain for them to expect, with their own forces alone, to bring the war to a conclusion. He found it extremely difficult to overcome their diffidence, and was obliged to observe the utmost caution, in order to avoid awakening those suspicions which they had long indulged against the Spaniards. At length however he accomplished his design through the marquis de Roubais, who, as was mentioned above, had acted a principal part in promoting the reconciliation of the southern provinces. With this nobleman, Farnese had formed an intimate connexion, and had laboured assiduously to make him sensible how necessary it was that the troops should be permitted to return. The marquis, flattered with the familiarity to which he was admitted, and prompted by the view of advancing his credit with the king, yielded at last to the prince's solicitations, and then employed his influence with the States so effectually, that they not only consented to the return of the forces, but even petitioned the king for it in the most earnest terms ^f.

NOTHING could be more acceptable to Philip than this application, and orders were immediately sent to Italy for the march of four regiments of veterans, consisting of near ten thousand men ;
who,

^f Bentivoglio, p. 258.

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who, together with several thousand Burgundians and Germans, arrived in the Netherlands towards the end of the summer 1582. After the arrival of this reinforcement, the prince of Parma's army amounted to sixty thousand foot and four thousand horse; but finding it necessary to leave more than the half of that number in garrisons, he could keep only about thirty thousand in the field; and a part of these was employed in Friesland under Verdugo, while the rest were under his own immediate command in the southern provinces. With these last he took Cateau Cambresis, Ninove, Gaesbec, and several other places; he attacked the army of the States, which he compelled to retire under the cannon of Ghent; and then he laid siege to Brussels. But the severity of the season, and the difficulty of finding provisions in a country which had been so long the seat of war, obliged him to desist from his attempt, and to put his troops into winter-quarters &.

THE United States, on the other hand, discovered great alacrity and zeal in supporting their new established government. They raised their yearly revenue from two millions four hundred thousand, to four millions of guilders, with which they maintained, besides their native troops, a considerable number of British, French, and German forces. But so great a proportion of these forces was necessary for defending the forts and towns, that no army could be assembled sufficient to contend with the enemy in the field, nor even to raise the siege of any of those places which the prince of Parma attempted to subdue. Thus the number of towns belonging to the confederates was daily diminished, while their acquisitions were few and inconsiderable. And, as the enemy was now much more formidable than before, they were filled

State of the
confederacy.

filled with the most disquieting apprehensions when they looked forward to the opening of a new campaign. Anjou, who participated with them in the anxiety which so critical a situation was fitted to excite, did every thing in his power to procure from France the succours which he had given them reason to expect. After many delays, the duke de Montpensier and mareschal Biron arrived in the Netherlands in the end of November, with between seven and eight thousand men, partly Swiss and partly French. With this reinforcement, under so able a general as Biron, Anjou perceived that he might retard the progress of the prince of Parma's arms, but that he could not hope either to expel him from his new conquests, or to bring the war to a conclusion: he therefore renewed his solicitations at the court of France, and endeavoured to engage his brother more heartily to espouse his cause.

Henry's de-
liberations.

HENRY's counsellors were much divided in their opinions with regard to the measures proper to be pursued on this occasion. By some of them, the present opportunity was represented as the happiest that could offer for uniting the Netherlands to the crown of France. But, as these men did not intend to advance the interest of Anjou, they did not employ any argument addressed to Henry's friendship or generosity; and instead of exhorting him to afford his brother aid sufficient to establish himself securely in his new sovereignty, they advised him only to give him such assistance as might enable him to stop the progress of the Spanish arms. To this counsel they subjoined, that Henry ought to maintain a fleet in the Channel, and an army on the frontier of Luxemburg, in order to prevent the prince of Parma from receiving supplies from Spain or Italy. And in this posture, they said, he ought to wait, without exposing his troops to the hazards of war, till the contending parties should exhaust their strength, when it would be

be easy for him to drive the Spaniards out of the Netherlands, and his brother and the States, in order to obtain his protection, would gladly accept of whatever terms he should think fit to impose. But such a plan, which the great abilities of Farnese would have disconcerted, was too refined, and required too much labour, patience, attention and expence, to be relished by a prince so indolent and voluptuous as Henry, who was so improvident of the future, and whose affairs were so exceedingly involved.

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HE listened with less reluctance to a proposal made him by some others of his counsellors, who being well acquainted with his character, perceived that his hesitation proceeded in a great measure from the shame of deserting his brother, and that in reality he wished for a pretence to reject his application. These men, secret enemies to the duke, and partisans of Philip, whose money it was believed they had accepted, were afraid to declare openly against a measure in which the heir-apparent of the crown, supported by the queen-mother, was so deeply interested. They affected to approve highly of the granting Anjou's request, provided the king could comply with it consistently with the interest of his kingdom. But both the interest and honour of France, they thought, required that the States should previously agree, that, in the event of the duke's death without issue, the king and his heirs should succeed him in the sovereignty of the Netherlands. They knew that the States would not consent to this condition. It was, however, proposed to them, and having met with that reception from them which there was reason to expect, notice was soon afterwards sent to Anjou by the queen-mother, and his other friends, of the unsuccessful issue of their endeavours to serve him.

Henry refuses
to grant his
request.

THIS

THIS disappointment, which rendered it impossible for him to fulfil the expectations of his new subjects, was calculated to give him the most sensible concern. A candid and grateful prince would have thought himself bound more strongly than ever to exert himself in their behalf; and, by a careful attention to their interests, joined to a faithful discharge of his other obligations, to atone for his failure in that engagement which he was unable to perform. Widely different were the sentiments which arose in the mind of the faithless ungenerous Anjou. Apprehensive that the Flemings, disgusted on account of their disappointment in those hopes of assistance with which they had been deluded, might withdraw their allegiance from him, and reconcile themselves to their former sovereign; he resolved to prevent them from executing this design, in case they should conceive it, and in violation of all the oaths which he had sworn so lately, he formed a plan of depriving them of their liberty, by making himself master of all the towns into which his troops had already found, or could by force or stratagem find admission.

THIS strange design, it is said, was first suggested to him by his partisans in France, in order to induce Henry to grant him the assistance which he solicited; and it was strongly recommended by Fervaques, and other French nobility who had accompanied him to the Netherlands. These men were all real or pretended friends to Anjou, and affected to be deeply concerned for his honour, with which they persuaded him, that such a limited authority as he possessed was utterly incompatible. Had they been his most inveterate enemies, they could not have advised him to a measure more likely to prove fatal to his interest. Yet this weak prince, without communicating his intention to Biron or Monpensier, who would have

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have refused their consent, readily embraced the counsel that was given him, and immediately proceeded to deliberate with his advisers concerning the means of carrying it into execution ^h.

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It was agreed, that the French troops, in all the towns where they were quartered, should, under the pretence of a mutiny, take up arms, and expel the garrisons; and in this manner he got possession of Dunkirk, Dixmunde, Dendremonde, and several other places; but his principal object was the city of Antwerp. It would have been in vain, he believed, to attempt making himself master of so strong a place by open force, with so small a number of his troops as were within the city; and therefore, in conjunction with his counsellors, he exerted all his ingenuity in contriving how force and artifice might be united. On this occasion, fortune seemed to favour his design. Towards the middle of January, after the frost had continued for some time, the States signified their intention to have his troops employed in an expedition against some of the enemy's towns in Friesland, which, on account of their wet situation, were accessible only in the time of frost. Anjou pretended to enter with great alacrity into this design. He immediately gave orders to have his troops conducted to the villages in the neighbourhood of Antwerp, where he held them ready to march upon the shortest notice; and, under various pretences, he brought to his court at Antwerp almost all the French noblesse, who had been dispersed throughout the Netherlands.

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BEING thus prepared, his plan was to seize upon the gate of Cronenburg, which lay next to the palace, with his body-guards, and to introduce his army silently in the night; but, on the day immediately

^h Thuanus, l. xxvii c. 10. Meteren, p. 336.

immediately preceding, an obscure report of his intention was circulated among the citizens, and a general alarm excited. The prince of Orange and the magistrates thought it proper to inform the duke of this report, and proposed to hang up lights in the city, and to stretch chains across the streets and gates, in order to quiet the apprehensions of the people. Anjou could not, without confirming the suspicions entertained against him, refuse his consent to this proposal; but as he possessed a considerable share of his mother's duplicity and artifice, he assumed with so much seeming sincerity, the appearance of indignation against the authors of the report, accompanied with such strong professions of attachment to the Netherlands in general, and the city of Antwerp in particular, that not only the magistrates, but even the prince of Orange was almost persuaded of his innocence. The streets however were barricaded, the whole town was illuminated, and many of the citizens were under arms.

THESE circumstances having made it necessary for Anjou to change his plan, he went early next morning to the prince of Orange's apartment in the castle, and after informing him that he had ordered his troops to be drawn out for a general review before their departure for Friesland, he desired the prince to witness it. Whether William had still any suspicion of his design is uncertain; but he refused to accompany him, alleging the badness of the day, and the state of his wound, as an excuse for his refusal; and he advised the duke to put off the review till some future day, when the people would be entirely delivered from those apprehensions with which they were at present disquieted. Anjou pretended that he would comply with his advice, and left him; but soon afterwards he sent him notice,

tice, that, finding the day grown better, he still resolved to hold the review, as he had at first directed. He then gave orders to remove the barricades in the street which leads to the gate of Ripdorp, and set out, attended with a retinue in arms, amounting to between two and three hundred men.

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HE had no sooner passed the gate and the draw-bridge, than his attendants fell sword in hand upon the guards, and having butchered some of them, obliged the rest to take shelter in the guard-house. The orders which he had sent to the camp had been punctually executed. The whole army was in motion, and seventeen companies of foot, six hundred lances, and four troops of horse were at hand, and ready to enter the city. They rushed in impetuously; and, having set fire to some houses near the gate, as a signal for the rest of the troops to hasten forward, they spread themselves over the town, crying out, "May the mass flourish: the city is taken."

THE citizens had been in some measure freed from their apprehensions, by Anjou's protestations on the evening before; but they had not been put entirely off their guard. They flew instantly to arms, and quickly formed a close compacted body, of sufficient strength to make head against the enemy. Their number was soon augmented by others, who flocked to their assistance from every quarter of the city. None declined exposing themselves to danger, or trusted to others for their defence. They remembered the devastations which had been committed some years before by the mutinous Spaniards, and were persuaded, that they could not now avoid a repetition of the disasters which they then suffered, by any other means, but by exerting their utmost vigour, and shewing, each man for himself,

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self, a contempt of danger. Animated therefore by the dread of that ruin with which their fortunes, their friends, their wives and children, were about to be overwhelmed; and fired with indignation against their ungrateful, perfidious enemy, they advanced with a degree of fury which the French troops were unable to withstand. Many of the French had entered the houses for the sake of plunder. These men were quickly surrounded by the citizens, and put to the sword; the rest were driven back towards the gate. There they expected, either to be supported by their friends from the camp, or to make their escape out of the city; but, having neglected to secure the portcullis, the soldiers, who had shut themselves up in the guard-house, had sallied out and let it down. By this circumstance, the French were thrown into despair, and the resolution and spirit of the citizens augmented. The situation of the former was now truly deplorable: disappointed of that assistance from without, on which they had depended, and crowded together into a narrow space; while the citizens, who pursued, poured their shot upon them without a moment's intermission; they fell in heaps above one another, till the gate was choked with the dead and wounded.

THE citizens made next a desperate attack on a body of French troops who had mounted the rampart, and either put them to the sword, or tumbled them headlong from the wall. Of this scene, Anjou himself, and the Swiss troops, who had attempted in vain to burst open the gate, were spectators. At first he thought it was the citizens that were thrown down, and believed it must have been by accident that the portcullis had been shut. He could not suppose that the inhabitants, unaccustomed to the use of arms, could, in the space of an hour, have discomfited so
great

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great a number of disciplined forces ; but he was soon undeceived in his conjecture. The citizens, still inflamed with indignation, on account of his unprovoked, atrocious attempt, pointed their cannon towards the place where he stood, and and killed a considerable number of the Swifs.

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THE prince of Orange, who lodged in the castle, at the opposite end of the city, remained ignorant for some time of what had passed, and when intelligence of it was brought him, he at first believed it to be some accidental scuffle between the inhabitants and soldiers ; but at last receiving more certain information of the truth, he set out with a part of the garrison for the scene of action. In his way thither he met Fervaques advancing towards him with a body of French troops, which had been left behind in the palace. At the first onset, Fervaques himself was taken prisoner, and his troops, disheartened by the loss of their commander, and still more by the consciousness of their treachery, were easily overcome. William then proceeded to the gate of Ripdorp, where he arrived in time to prevent the citizens from wrecking an useless, though merited, vengeance upon the prisoners.

NOTHING could be more affecting, says an historian¹, whose information was derived from eye-witnesses, than the spectacle at the gate : the dead bodies piled one above another to a considerable height, and the wounded mingled with the dead, and struggling to disengage themselves. At the prince's intercession the lives of all the prisoners were spared, and many of the wounded recovered, through the attention and tenderness of those to whose care they were committed.

THE

¹ Van Meteren.

THE number of the French found dead in different parts of the city, amounted to fifteen hundred, among whom were upwards of three hundred persons of distinction. And the prisoners, including those who surrendered to the prince of Orange, were computed at two thousand. So great was the loss which Anjou sustained from this ill-concerted enterprise; while only one hundred of the inhabitants were killed, and the same number wounded. It would be impossible, notwithstanding the desperate bravery of the citizens, to account for this extreme disparity betwixt the loss on the one side, and that on the other, were it not for a circumstance which one of the historians* has mentioned, that the French, either from negligence, or their general's confidence of success, had brought very little ammunition with them, and stood, during the greatest part of the combat, exposed to the enemy's fire, without having any other weapon to defend them but their swords.

IT is easier to imagine than describe the confusion with which Anjou must have been overwhelmed, when he reflected on the egregious folly into which he had been betrayed. He passed the night in a neighbouring fort called Berchem, where there was neither furniture nor provisions. From that place he wrote a letter to the senate of Antwerp, in which, after boasting absurdly of the proofs which he had given of his attachment to the Netherlands, he subjoined, That although the misfortune which had happened, had arisen from the unworthy treatment which he had met with, yet he was deeply penetrated with sorrow and repentance on account of it; that he still retained all his wonted affection towards them, and had sent them this letter partly to enquire what were their intentions with respect to him, and partly to desire

* Reidan.

desire that they would send him his papers, furniture, and servants; hoping that these last, who were entirely innocent of what had been done, should not suffer any harm¹.

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To this letter the senate made no return, but referred it to the consideration of the prince of Orange and the States; and in the mean time Anjou being utterly destitute of every thing necessary for the support of his troops, left Berchem and directed his march towards Dendremonde. He intended to have gone thither by the shortest road, but the citizens of Antwerp having sent a number of armed vessels to oppose his passage over the Scheld, he was obliged to turn back, and to fetch a compass round by Duffel, Mechlin, Rimenant, and Vilvorden. In this march, besides suffering the greatest hardships in his own person, he lost a considerable number of his troops by an inundation of the river Nethe. From Duffel he wrote letters to the governors of Brussels, and other places, in which he threw the whole blame of what had happened on the inhabitants of Antwerp, and represented the affair as a tumult, in which his troops, when upon their way to the camp, had interfered, but which had arisen in consequence of the ill usage which he himself had received. This disingenuous conduct served to exasperate the people of Antwerp more than ever against him, and they published a vindication of their conduct, setting forth, "That they had in all respects demeaned themselves towards him as became good and faithful subjects. They had given him even more than their proportion of the supplies, and had raised the sum of seventy thousand guilders; which, instead of applying it to pay the arrears due to the army, he had distributed among his French and Swiss troops to encourage them in their

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¹ Meteren, p. 339.

late atrocious attempt. Nothing could be more palpably unjust than to impute that attempt of the citizens of Antwerp, since, on the same day, the French troops had offered the same violence in other places. By the kind providence of Heaven, the plan concerted to enslave them, had been frustrated, in such towns as were of the greatest importance; and it was their earnest prayer, that the duke might become sensible of the iniquity of his conduct, and resolve for the future to govern the provinces conformably to those fundamental laws of the constitution, which, at his accession, he had solemnly sworn to observe."

THE news of what had happened, having been quickly diffused throughout the provinces, excited universal astonishment and indignation. The prince of Parma, desirous to improve the opportunity which was presented to him, attempted to reconcile the people to their antient government. But his endeavours were not more successful now than formerly. The confederates were deaf to his proposals; and even refused to appoint ambassadors to treat with him concerning peace.

Deliberations
of the States.

THE States in the mean time were deliberating concerning the letter which Anjou had written to the senate of Antwerp. Had they listened to that just resentment with which they were inflamed, they would not have hesitated to declare that he had forfeited the sovereignty. But they considered how extremely critical their situation was become, while Anjou was master of several of their fortified towns, and the prince of Parma hovered round them with an army, against which they were unable to contend. In this perplexity they intreated the prince of Orange, who had hitherto remained silent, to assist them with his counsel. No person felt more sensibly for the distress into which Anjou's temerity had plunged the confederacy;

deracy ; and no person had a juster ground of provocation. It was by his means chiefly that Anjou had obtained the sovereignty ; and yet it could not be doubted, that in sending Fervaques with troops to the castle, as above related, the intention was to deprive him either of his life or his liberty. Notwithstanding this, William had at first interposed to prevent the citizens from using any violence against the prisoners ; and he now gave the following conciliatory advice to the States in writing, as he generally did in matters which he deemed of high importance.

“ It was not, he said, without reluctance, that he had resolved to deliver his opinion on the difficult question which was now before them, as it had of late been the practice of many persons to blame him for every misfortune that had befallen the confederacy. Even if he had been invested with absolute authority, their censure would have been unjust, since the issues of things belong to God only, and no man can answer for the success of the best concerted enterprise. Considering his age, and the injustice with which he had been treated, it would be prudent perhaps not to expose himself again to the obloquy of his detractors. But his concern for the prosperity of the Netherlands would not suffer him to maintain that silence, which a regard to his personal ease and security required ; especially as they had assured him that they would take in good part, and interpret favourably, whatever counsel he should offer.

“ NOTHING was farther from his intention than to attempt to justify that atrocious violence which had been lately perpetrated : on the contrary, he thought the conduct of the duke had been such as proved beyond a possibility of doubt, that he

had forfeited his title to the sovereignty. Notwithstanding this, no person, he believed, who suffered himself to consider attentively the course of events since their first connexion with the duke, would deny that this connexion had been attended with advantages. By his troops, not only the siege of Cambray, but that of Lochem too, had been raised, and the whole province of Guelderland thereby saved from the depredations of the enemy. In consequence of his election, peace had been established between the catholics and protestants in France, and the latter left at liberty to enter into the service of the States. Not to mention what they ought perhaps to prize more than any thing else, that, by electing the duke for their sovereign, not only the authority, but the name and arms of Spain, had been abolished in the Netherlands, and a foundation laid, upon which their liberty might be firmly established, provided they should exert themselves with their wonted zeal and vigour. When these things were considered, there would not appear much ground for the censures passed on those by whom the duke's election had been promoted. But whether they had judged wisely or unwisely, the States must now resolve either to make peace with the king of Spain, or trust for the future to their own strength, or enter into terms of accommodation with the duke.

“WITH regard to the first of these, he observed, that besides that all the same reasons still subsisted against returning under the Spanish yoke, which had formerly determined them to shake it off; it must appear preposterous to think of reconciling themselves as subjects, to a prince, whose name and ensigns were obliterated, and whose authority they had so solemnly renounced. There was truth in what some persons (friends of Spain more than their native country) had suggested, that

that it was more desirable for the people of the Low Countries to be subject to a distant, than to a neighbouring prince, as it must be more difficult for the former, than for the latter to encroach upon their liberty. But this maxim could not, in the present divided state of the Netherlands, be urged in favour of the dominion of the king of Spain; who, besides possessing a powerful army ready to overwhelm them, was absolute master of several of the provinces; and was therefore, in reality, much nearer to the confederacy than any other prince.

“PROMPTED by this and other considerations, they had bestowed the sovereignty on the duke of Anjou; and *he*, it could not be denied, had forfeited his title to it. This was acknowledged even by the duke himself, who was now sensible of his folly. But notwithstanding his repentance, there was much ground to doubt of the expediency of entering into a second agreement with one by whom the first had been so grossly violated. There was ground to dread that the same evil counsellors, by whom the duke had been once deluded, might again deceive him; and there was reason to suspect, that confidence could not be soon restored between the French troops and the people of the Netherlands.

“ON the other hand, he thought it his duty to call their attention to the consequences which must attend their refusing to be pacified. The duke would deliver all the fortified towns which he possessed, into the hands of the Spaniards. Both he and his brother, the king of France, would from friends be converted into the most bitter enemies; from whom all that mischief might be expected, that can be contrived and executed by those who are stimulated by ambition, and inflamed with animosity and resentment. An immediate stop would be put by the French king, to their commerce with his subjects; and while he would shut
his

his harbours against their ships, he would open a passage through his dominions for the troops of the king of Spain. Even the queen of England, though highly dissatisfied with the duke's conduct, yet were she to be informed that the States had obstinately refused to be reconciled, would be exceedingly offended. And if they should lose her favour, as well as that of France, to what other friend could they have recourse, either able or willing to support them? They must for the future trust for their preservation entirely to themselves. They must, without delay, make a numerous augmentation of their forces; and yet he knew not where these forces could be raised, since the devastation of the war had been so great in every province of the confederacy, that scarcely a sufficient number of the people remained, to carry on their trade and manufactures. In order to maintain such an army as was necessary, much larger sums of money were requisite, than had hitherto been collected. What these were, would appear from the scheme which he now delivered to them, containing a particular description of all the ordinary and extraordinary expences of the war. From the difficulty which they had experienced in procuring money for paying the garisons alone, they might judge whether they were possessed of funds adequate to the expence both of these and of an army in the field; without which, it was impossible that they could for any considerable time resist the enemy.

“HE was far from censuring those who advised them to trust to the Almighty for protection. The counsel of these persons was pious and well intended; but he thought, that to engage in any difficult enterprise without the means of carrying it into execution, was more properly to tempt the Divine Providence than to trust in it; and that those only could be said to exercise a proper trust in God, who, after embracing the most favourable

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able opportunities of action, had recourse to Heaven by prayer, to crown their undertakings with success. It behoved them therefore still attentively to consider their strength and their resources; and if, without foreign assistance, they should find them sufficient for the purposes which they had in view, they would, in his opinion, judge wisely in resolving to retain the sovereignty in their own hands.

“THERE was a time when the people of the Netherlands might have established themselves in this happy state of freedom and independence; when, in spite of the king of Spain, they might have expelled his brother John of Austria from the provinces. But our present situation, continued William, is widely different from what it was at the time of which I speak. A powerful Spanish army, seconded by those who were then our friends, is at our gates. The strength of the confederacy is impaired. Even with the assistance of the French troops, we have been unable to stop the progress of the enemy. If nevertheless you shall, upon inquiry, find that you are able, by making greater exertions, to do more alone, than when you were assisted by others, banish for ever all thoughts of an accommodation with the duke, and resolve henceforth, alone and unassisted, to oppose both him and the Spaniards. Proceed instantly to the execution of your design. But I dread that before you can make the preparations necessary for entering upon action, before you can collect either the troops or the money requisite, and even before you can appoint a general to command your forces, many of your towns will be taken; and many of them despairing of relief, will enter into terms of accommodation with the Spaniards. For these reasons you will judge, perhaps, that in your present circumstances the wisest resolution which you can form, is to enter into a treaty of reconciliation with the duke. And if this shall be the result

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sult of your deliberations, I have only one other counsel to suggest, which is, to give particular attention in your new agreement to prevent the fortified towns from being exposed on any future occasion to that danger from which the city of Antwerp has so narrowly escaped; and for this purpose to require, that no officer or soldier shall be admitted into garrisons without taking an oath of allegiance and fidelity to the States^o."

Reconcile-
ment of the
States with
Anjou.
March 8th.

THIS reasoning of the prince of Orange produced the desired effect upon a great majority of the deputies, and a negotiation was immediately begun, and soon afterwards a treaty of peace and reconciliation was concluded on the following conditions: That all the French prisoners in Antwerp should be set at liberty, the duke's papers and other effects restored, and ninety thousand guilders given him for discharging the arrears due to his troops. That he should deliver up all the towns which he had seized, retire to Dunkirk with four hundred foot and three hundred horse, and remain there till every point of difference should be entirely settled; that he should renew the oath which he took at his inauguration, to govern the provinces according to the fundamental laws, and that all his troops should take an oath of allegiance to the States, binding themselves to serve them faithfully against their enemies, and never to be concerned in any attempt to the prejudice of their authority.

Attempts on
the life of the
prince of
Orange.

As in promoting this agreement the prince of Orange appears to have acted under a conviction, that there was no other expedient by which the confederacy could be saved from ruin; so, in being able to persuade the States to adopt it, he gave the most convincing proof of his unlimited influence over that assembly. The people in general,

^o Van Meteren and Thuanus.

neral, especially in Flanders and Brabant, were extremely averse from all accommodation. Their hereditary antipathy against the French had, on this occasion, risen to the greatest height. Many of the deputies too were animated with the same aversion and resentment; nor can it be doubted, that if they had not been prevented by that deference which they had been long accustomed to entertain for William's opinion, they would have proceeded against Anjou to the utmost extremities, and have resolved never more to acknowledge his authority. The Spaniards were not ignorant by whom the States had been prevented from forming this resolution; and they were now convinced, that, till the prince of Orange were removed, no event, however promising, would induce the confederates to return to their allegiance. They had recourse therefore to the dishonourable means of private assassination; and to attempt it, different persons were instigated about this time by Philip or his ministers; one of them by Philip himself, according to the declaration of the criminal; but more probably, by his ministers at Madrid; another by his ambassador at the court of France; and a third by the marquis de Roubaix and the prince of Parma. The conspiracy of the two former was detected, and they suffered death; and the last, a French officer, whom Roubaix had taken prisoner, and who had pretended to agree to the proposal, in order to procure his liberty, gave information to William's friends of the arguments which had been employed to persuade him, and shewed by his conduct afterwards in the service of the States, the sincerity of his abhorrence of that unhallowed deed which he had been solicited to perform ^p.

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THE danger to which the prince ~~was~~ so often exposed from the inveterate resentment of the Spaniards, ought to have endeared his person and counsels to his countrymen, and they produced this effect in a high degree upon all those who were able to comprehend the wisdom and moderation with which he had conducted their affairs. But great numbers having formed their judgment of Anjou's election to the sovereignty, from the late unhappy consequences with which it had been accompanied, could not refrain from ascribing some sinister intention to those who had been active in promoting it. They were incapable of discerning the strength of the motives by which William had been prompted to advise the States to renew their agreement, and they even fostered suspicions of his having attached himself to the duke, with a view to some private advantage. This spirit of discontent was not confined to the vulgar, but likewise infected several of the deputies of the States, who became sullen and refractory; and by their contentious opposition to almost every measure that was proposed, disturbed and retarded the deliberations of that assembly. A great majority however of the members agreed to employ the French and Swiss troops under marshal Biron, whom the duke had appointed to command them. Biron having not only had no concern in the attempt upon Antwerp, but having been considered by Anjou as one by whom it would have been opposed, was the most unexceptionable person to whom the command could have been committed, and he had been long distinguished for his military skill and experience. At first his arms were attended with success. He compelled the fort of Wouda to surrender, and with inferior forces he repulsed the prince of Parma, who had attacked his lines near the town of Rosendal. But it was impossible for him with so small an army to stop the progress of the Spaniards

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Spaniards in other places, or to face them in the open field. Farnese therefore pushed his conquests with great rapidity, and made himself master of Endove, Dieft, and Westerlo, while he practised every art of negociation and intrigue against Bruges, Ghent, and other places.

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DURING the course of these transactions the duke of Anjou fell into a lingering illness at Dunkirk, which was generally supposed to be the effect of those hardships which he suffered in his retreat from Antwerp. Whether he believed himself insecure in his present situation, while the prince of Parma was so briskly carrying on his conquests in the neighbourhood, or found that his health required a change of air, and a relaxation from the fatigues of business, or whether he had conceived hopes at this time of obtaining, by a personal interview with his brother, more powerful assistance than he had hitherto received, does not appear with sufficient evidence. But whatever was the motive which determined him, he left Dunkirk and set out for France.

THE prince of Parma was no sooner informed of his departure, than he quitted Herentals, and led his troops to Dunkirk. The States, aware of the importance of that place, ordered marshal Biron to march with all his forces to its relief. But such was the resentment which the Ghentese and other Flemings had conceived against the French, that no consideration could prevail upon them to suffer Biron to pass through their territories. They had resolved, they said, never to accede to the late agreement with the duke, whom they could not trust, and they would not be indebted to his troops for their defence. The consequence to be expected followed. The garrison of Dunkirk, which consisted wholly of French, gave up the town in a few days to the prince of Parma.

Progress of
the prince of
Parma's
arms.

Parma. He then laid siege to Nieuport, and took it with so much facility, as gave ground for a suspicion of treachery on the part of the garrison. He intended next to have invested Ostend, but having learnt that the prince of Orange had taken particular pains to provide for its security, he relinquished his design; and having turned his arms against Dixmude and Meningen, he subdued these and several other places with a degree of celerity with which the people of the Netherlands had never been accustomed to see any military enterprises carried on. But his success served only to dazzle and confound the confederates, instead of opening their eyes to the fatal consequences of that discord which had exposed so great a number of their associates an easy prey to the Spaniards. Except augmenting the garrisons of two or three towns, in the preservation of which some of the deputies were personally interested, no vigorous resolution of any consequence was formed by the States, although they held their sessions daily, and were daily alarmed with fresh accounts of some new loss which the confederacy had sustained.

Injurious
suspicions
against the
prince of
Orange.

ABOUT this time an incident fell out at Antwerp which strongly marks the spirit by which the Flemings were actuated on this occasion. The prince of Orange having given orders for building an additional rampart for the greater security of the castle, some secret partisans of Spain took occasion from thence to insinuate, that he intended to deliver that fortress to the French, and was now preparing it for their reception. The people too easily believed this injurious suggestion; and having taken up arms, they ran tumultuously to the castle, with a resolution to expel the garrison. William immediately presented himself before them. The sight of a person whom they had been so long accustomed to revere, joined to the evidence

evidence which they received on the spot, of the utter falsehood of that report which they had so rashly credited, appeased the fury of the greater number, and quelled the tumult. But there were some among them more audacious and malignant than the rest, who called him by the contumelious names of deserter and traitor of his country. This treatment, so unmerited from a people whom he had saved from ruin, affected him in the most sensible manner. He admonished the magistrates to take cognisance of the licentiousness which they had witnessed; but finding, that, on account of the great number of the guilty, they were afraid to exercise their authority, he left Antwerp, and retired into Zealand, after having delivered directions to the magistrats in writing, for the government and defence of the city, and nominated the Sieur de St. Aldegonde, chief magistrate, or governor, for the ensuing year ^a.

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He retires
to Zealand.
July 22.

WILLIAM did not intend by changing the place of his residence to withdraw his attention from the southern provinces. He interested himself as much as ever in their affairs, and meant only to provide for his own security, and to remove the assembly of the States (which was summoned to meet at Middleburg) to a situation in which the deputies would not be so much influenced by the emissaries of Spain, nor so much disturbed in their

^a Of the affection of the maritime provinces towards the prince of Orange, and of the trust and confidence which they reposed in him, he received about this time a conspicuous proof, by a resolution into which all the cities entered, except two, of creating him earl of Holland and Zealand, with all the powers and privileges which belonged to that ancient dignity. How far the prince himself contributed to their forming this resolution, does not appear from the cotemporary historians. It did not contradict the treaty between the United States and the duke of Anjou; as, by that treaty, the maritime provinces had only bound themselves to contribute their share of the public expences. Yet it was matter of some obloquy against the prince, of whom it was said, that he had not been inattentive to his private interest.

their deliberations by the tumultuous disposition of the people. He still employed all his interest to reconcile the cities of Brabant and Flanders to the continuance of the French troops in the Netherlands. And his endeavours proved effectual with Brussels, and some other towns which lay nearest to the enemy; but Ghent, and most of the other cities, remained as inflexible as ever, and resolved never to admit the French within their territories, or to be indebted to them for protection. The States therefore found it necessary to give orders for the departure of these troops, at a time when every friend of his country, who suffered himself to reflect on the critical situation of the confederacy, thought that the provinces ought rather to have made concessions to Anjou and the French king, in order to induce the latter to augment their number. Biron put them on board transports at Biervliet, and thence conducted them by sea to France.

August 27.

THE Spaniards were now at liberty to pursue their conquests almost without opposition. Farnese immediately formed the blockade of Ipres. Alost was sold to him by an English and Walloon garrison for the payment of their arrears. The country of Waes, and the town of Rupplemonde on the Scheld, were subdued, and Zutphen too was taken by surprise; the consequence of which was, that the Veluwe, an extensive territory between the Iffel and the Rhine, was laid open to the incursions of the enemy.

IN the mean time the secret partisans of Spain were daily increasing in Bruges, Ghent, and other places. Many persons had declared themselves against Anjou with so much violence, that they dreaded his return. Many were intimidated by the rapidity of the prince of Parma's conquests. Some having been intrusted with the public money, were afraid of being called to account for their management of it by the prince of Orange and the

the States, and all of them were allured to their first allegiance by the moderation with which Farnese treated such as had already submitted to him, and the strict fidelity with which he adhered to his engagements.

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AMONG the persons, who, prompted by these motives, were desirous of again reducing their country under the Spanish government, the prince of Orange had the mortification to find his brother-in-law, count Heremberg. This nobleman, weak, inconstant, and governed by his wife, who was the prince's sister, but had for some time been at variance with her brother, had formed the design of delivering the province of Guelderland, of which he had been appointed governor, into the hands of the Spaniards. His plot having been detected before it was ripe for execution, he was seized and imprisoned by an order of the States. But having been afterwards set at liberty upon his parole, he gave irrefragable proof of his guilt by flying over to the enemy.

THE prince of Chimai's intrigues in Flanders were more successful. This nobleman, eldest son of the duke D'Arfshot, had been educated in the catholic faith, but some time before the present period, he had openly professed the reformed religion, and attached himself with much apparent zeal to the party of the prince of Orange and the States. Conscious that both his religion and patriotism were mere grimace, he had laboured with consummate artifice to remove any suspicions that might be entertained of his sincerity. He was perpetually surrounded with the protestant ministers, with whom he lived on the most familiar terms; and he published an apology for his conduct, in which, with the highest encomiums on the protestant faith, he mingled the bitterest invectives against Philip, bestowing on him every reproachful

Treachery
of the prince
of Chimai.

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May.

reproachful epithet which the most implacable hatred could suggest. By these means he had insinuated himself into the favour of great numbers of the protestants, and particularly those of Bruges, who conferred upon him the government of their town. The prince of Orange, having received information of a secret correspondence which he held with the catholics, had at first attempted to dissuade the people of Bruges from electing him their governor, and he now gave secret instructions to the magistrates, to employ colonel Boyd, a Scotch officer, who commanded one of the regiments in garrison, to deprive Chimai of his authority. Boyd affected to enter heartily into the plan proposed, but he betrayed the magistrates, and gave immediate information of their design to Chimai; who, through an artful misrepresentation of their conduct, was enabled to expel them from the city. He then put others into their place, who were devoted to his interest, and still pretended all his wonted zeal for the reformed religion, till, having obliged many of the principal citizens to withdraw, he made himself master of the town, and then delivered it to the prince of Parma, upon condition that the prince should confer upon him the government of the province. To the obtaining of this request, which was granted by Farnese, and confirmed by Philip, Chimai thought himself the better intitled, as he had contributed in the same perfidious manner to the reduction of Ipres, which, after a blockade of nine months, had lately been obliged to surrender. Not long after this he threw off the mask of religion, and both he and one of the protestant ministers, who had been a principal instrument of his deceit, publicly abjured Calvinism, and declared themselves converts to the popish faith^r.

AN

^r Meteren, p. 357. Thuanus, lib. lxxix. c. 15.

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AN attempt of the same nature with that of Chimai on Bruges was made by Imbise, and other agents of France, to put Ghent and Dendremonde into his possession. In order to second their endeavours, he had pitched his camp between Ghent and Bruges; but the plan which had been formed for the surprise of Dendremonde was discovered, and Imbise, the principal contriver, who was chief magistrate of Ghent, a factious and turbulent old man, was condemned and executed.

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DURING these transactions, the prince of Orange was employed in establishing a thorough reconciliation between the States and the duke of Anjou, whose return with a numerous army the prince considered as the only remedy for the increasing calamities of the commonwealth. There was more reason now than ever to expect that Anjou would soon be able to fulfil his engagements. Through the Queen mother's intercession, Henry had openly declared his resolution to exert himself with vigour in the support of his brother's interest in the Netherlands. An ambassador had been sent by the States to congratulate with the duke on this desirable event, and to acquaint him of their having consented to certain conditions which he had proposed. His joy on this occasion was extreme, and he now indulged the most flattering expectations; but he did not long survive these events, which gave him so much pleasure. Having never enjoyed perfect health since the hardships which he underwent in his retreat from Antwerp, he was seized about this time with an illness, which might have been easily accounted for, from the unsound state of his constitution; but which, agreeably to the practice of the age, was attributed to poison*. Whatever was the cause,

Death of
Anjou.

Beginning of
June.

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he

* It was supposed to have been given him by his physician, bribed by the court of Spain.

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His character.

he died in great pain, at Chateau-Thierry, on the 10th of June, 1584, at the age of thirty.

SUCH was the conclusion of the restless life of this prince, whose weaknesses and vices were equally pernicious to himself, to the Netherlands, and to France. Improvident of the future, and unable to judge for himself, he was a slave to the selfish purposes of others, as well as to his own humour and caprice. He seems likewise to have been incapable of discerning the merit or demerit of those who approached him, or the soundness or folly of the counsels which they offered. He was not void of friendship or attachment, and he was active and ambitious; but he was entirely destitute of that patience, steadiness, and resolution, which are necessary in carrying on any important enterprise; and his conduct towards the United Provinces above related, too clearly justifies what was said of him by his sister Margaret, that if fraud and infidelity were to be banished from the earth, there was in him a stock sufficient from which it might be soon replenished ^p.

Assassination
of the prince
of Orange.

YET his death, at the present crisis, was a real calamity to the people of the United Provinces; but the memory of it was soon effaced by a much greater calamity, which in a few weeks afterwards befell them, in the death of the prince of Orange; against whom one of those atrocious attempts, to which Philip's proscription gave birth, proved at last successful. It was planned and afterwards executed in Delft, by Balthazar Gerard, a native of Villefans in Burgundy. This man, in order to facilitate his admission into the prince's presence, had called himself the son of a French protestant, of the name of Guion, who had suffered for the
fake

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sake of his religion. By this fictitious account of his extraction, joined to an artful affectation of zeal for the reformed religion and the service of the States, he became known to the prince; and William was so far deceived by this impostor, that he put him into the train of an ambassador to the court of France. This mark of confidence did not divert him from his ungenerous design; on the contrary, he had no sooner returned from France than he resolved to carry it into execution; and he would have done so, as he afterwards declared, on his first arrival, when he was admitted with letters into the prince's apartment, if he had not neglected to furnish himself with arms. But in a few days after, having returned to the palace, on the pretence of applying for a passport, he placed himself at the door of that apartment, in which the prince was at dinner with his wife Louisa de Cologni, and his sister the countess of Schwartzburg, and waited there, with a cloak cast round him, till they were retiring into another room. The princess, observing him look confused and pale, was greatly alarmed, and enquired what he wanted. He comes for a passport, answered the prince; when the assassin, stepping forward, shot him in the body with a pistol loaded with three balls. William had time only to say, "God have mercy on me, and this afflicted people: I am grievously wounded." Immediately after which he fell down, and in a few moments afterwards expired; the princess, overwhelmed with anguish, looking on; whose peculiar fate it was to see her second husband murdered, as her illustrious father, and her first husband, the amiable Teligni, had been, in the massacre of Paris, some years before.

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July 10th.

M 2

THE

* In the fifty-second year of his age.

THE murderer, in the mean time had made his escape out of the palace by a back-door, and had almost reached the ramparts. He was preparing to throw himself into the ditch, which was full of water, in the hopes of being able to swim over, when he was overtaken by two of the prince's guards.

UPON his first examination he declared, that, six years before the present period, he had formed the design of putting the prince to death; that he had then been deterred from his purpose by his friends; that he had again resumed it, when the king published his edict of proscription; that having been in the service of Du Pré, secretary to count Mansveldt, he had procured from him some blank subscriptions of the count's, which, in order to gain credit, he had delivered to the prince; that he had communicated his design to four jesuits in Treves and Tournay, who assured him, that if he should die in the execution of it, he would be deemed a martyr by the church.

To these circumstances, after the torture was applied, he subjoined, that the reward promised in the proscription had been his principal motive; that he had made known his purpose to the prince of Parma, and had been advised by him to converse with his secretary, Christopher Affonville; that Affonville had desired him to reflect on the difficulties which he must encounter; but had assured him, that he could not perform a more acceptable service either to the king or the prince of Parma; that he might depend, with perfect security, upon receiving the money promised in the king's edict of proscription; but exhorted him repeatedly to deny, in case of his being seized, that the prince of Parma had approved of his design; although the prince, he said, had in reality approved of it, and had consented to his using the blank subscriptions.

WHEN

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WHEN he was informed of the sentence pronounced against him, in which it was ordained, that his right hand should be burnt off, and the flesh of his body torn from the bones with burning pincers, he was at first thrown into the most dreadful consternation, and lamented bitterly that he had suffered the thirst of wealth to betray him into an action, which had plunged him into such intolerable misery ; but he soon recovered his natural fortitude, and said, that, far from repenting of what he had done, he was conscious of having merited the favour of God, and was sure of being admitted into a state of eternal happiness. And in this temper of mind he remained, both in the interval before his execution, and the time of it, during which he exhibited a degree of composure and tranquillity that filled the spectators with astonishment.

THE highest encomiums were bestowed on this deluded wretch by the popish ecclesiastics in the southern provinces; and in many cities they would have lighted up bonfires, and celebrated public rejoicings, if the consent of the people could have been obtained ; but even the prince of Parma's troops refused to join in these rejoicings, and openly declared their condemnation of an act, which they found repugnant to the dictates of their hearts, whatever might be said in justification of it, on the principles of crooked politics, or the popish faith.

THE reader will not need being told of the grief and consternation, which this melancholy event diffused throughout the confederated provinces. Each person mourned as for his parent, his guardian, and friend, and felt for the loss which the State had sustained, as men are wont to feel for their private and domestic calamities. Being now deprived of the person whose wisdom had, for many years, been their principal support, they

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they considered themselves as destitute and forlorn, and were overwhelmed with the most gloomy apprehensions of their future fate^r.

Character of
the prince.

NEVER was any person better fitted than the prince of Orange for the difficult situation in which he was placed, or better qualified for the arduous task of delivering an injured people from the yoke of their oppressor. Even his bitterest enemies allow him to have been possessed of vigilance, application, penetration, and sagacity, joined with a peculiar dexterity in governing the inclinations of men, and in conciliating and preserving their affections. To these accomplishments both the history of his life, and the testimony of the best informed historians, authorise us to add the virtues of fortitude and magnanimity, of justice and equity, of patience, equanimity, and moderation, which were never perhaps found united in one person in so eminent a degree^s. Amidst all the variety of fortune which he experienced, he was never either elated or depressed; but whether the events in which he was interested were prosperous or adverse, he preserved on all occasions the same composure and serenity of soul.

By a respectable popish historian^t, he is accused of avarice and rapacity, yet that author has not been able to produce a single fact to justify his charge. It appears not from any historian, that he was ever guilty of employing his power for the purpose of advancing his private interest to the prejudice either of individuals or the public. He always declined taking any concern in administering the finances. He did not even exact payment of the revenue which the States had appointed him; and at his death he left his private affairs so

^s Van Meteren, p. 363. Bentivoglio, lib. xii. Thuanus in hoc anno.

^t Thuani Historia.

^r Bentivoglio.

so much encumbered, that the States found it necessary to make provision for the support of his widow and children *.

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THE same historian has loaded him with the imputation of fraud and hypocrisy, of which however no proof was ever given but general invective, nor a single instance of deceit produced by his most inveterate enemies. Before his rupture with Philip, he testified on all occasions his disapprobation of the measures that were pursued; and after it, he acted uniformly the part of an open foe. He had no religion, say some catholic writers, but what his interest and ambition dictated. Yet he was decent and irreproachable in his conduct, as well as punctual in discharging the functions of that religion which he professed; nor do these authors pretend to offer any other evidence to justify their surmise, but that he gave up the catholic religion, in which he had been educated at the court of the emperor, and returned to that with which his mind had been tinctured in his earliest infancy. His religion was not indeed of the same spirit either with that of those whom he forsook, or of many of those whose cause he adopted. It suffered him not to regard either speculative opinions or external rights, as sufficient ground for harassing and butchering those from whom he differed in opinion. But in an age of cruel gloomy superstition, with which almost all the companions of his youth were deeply infected, his religion, conformably to the example and precepts of its author, was mild, moderate, and humane. Nor was it to one sect of Christians only that his moderation and humanity extended. As he did what he could while he adhered to the catholic faith to put a stop to the persecution of the protestants; so after he had embraced the reformed

* Wickfort, lib. ii.

reformed religion, he exerted his most strenuous endeavours to protect the catholics from violence, and to procure liberty for them to exercise their religion as far as was consistent with the public peace. To infer from this conduct, that he had no religion of his own, is going a great deal farther than to assert the lawfulness of persecution; it is equivalent to maintaining, that no Christian can be sincere who can live at peace with those who differ from him in his religious persuasion.

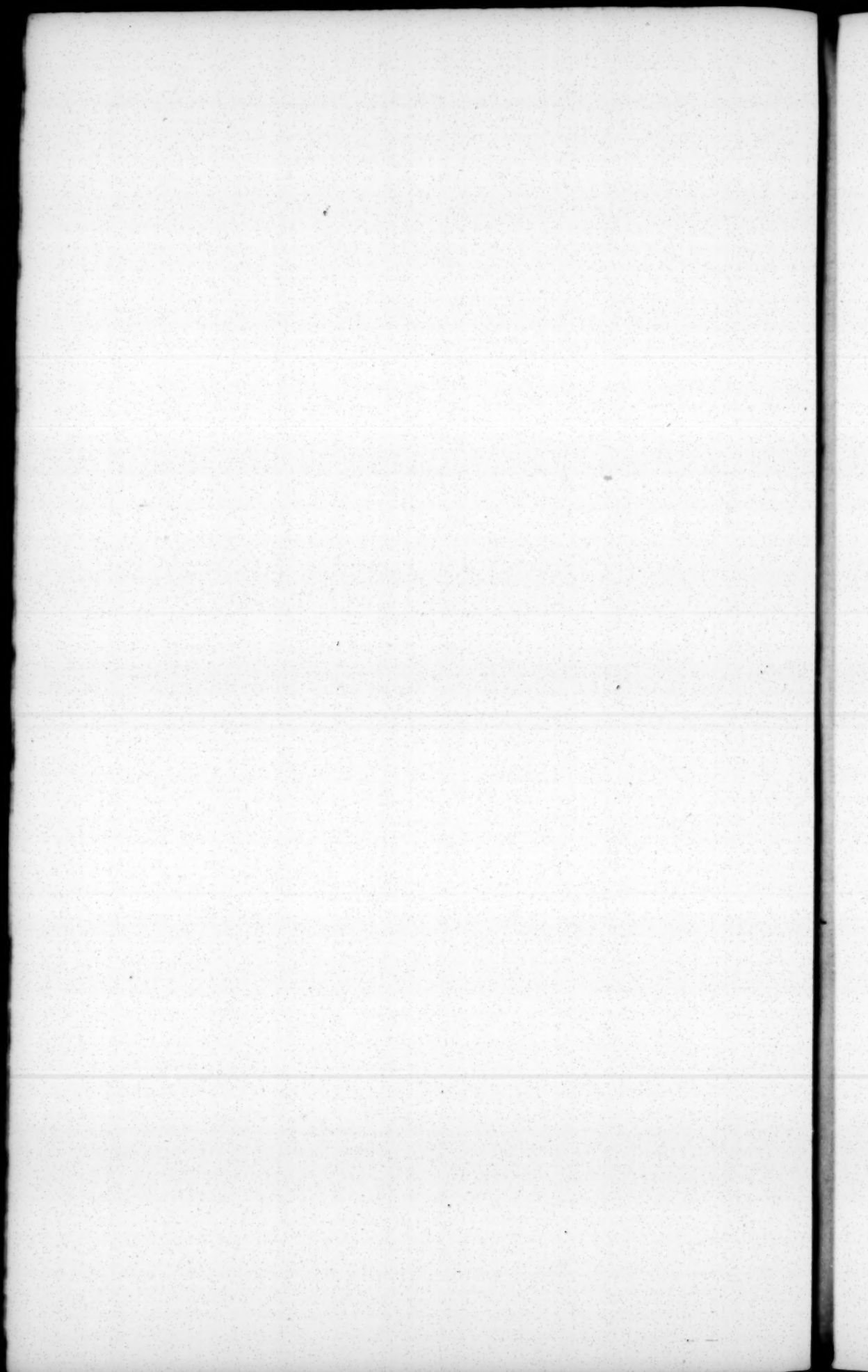
It is not to the purpose which the popish historians intended to serve by their portraits of William's character, to say of him that he was ambitious: in itself, ambition merits neither praise nor blame, but is culpable or laudable according to the end at which it aspires, and the means which it employs. But if we judge concerning the character of the prince of Orange according to this criterion, it must be impossible for persons so opposite in their principles, as the catholic and protestant historians, to agree.

If with the former, we place the rights of all sovereigns on the same foundation, without distinguishing between an absolute prince and the sovereign of a free people, and believe that every prince is, by an indefeasible and divine right, intitled to exercise a despotic power over the religion and liberty of his subjects; if we believe, that with the permission of the pope, a king may violate his most solemn oaths, and that the obligations of his subjects to obedience remain in force, even after every condition upon which they entered into them has been violated; if with such principles as these, we judge of the character of the prince of Orange, it will be difficult not to consider him as guilty both of perjury and rebellion; and, in this case, the most favourable verdict that can be passed upon his conduct, is to say, that it proceeded from a criminal ambition.

BUT

BUT if, on the other hand, we regard the pontiff's pretensions to the power of setting men at liberty from their oaths as absurd and impious; if we regard the rights of subjects as no less sacred than those of kings; if we distinguish between a prince invested with unlimited authority, and one whose power is circumstanced by the fundamental laws of the State; between a prince whose right to his dominions is indefeasible, and one who obtained his sovereignty only upon certain terms, which he swore to fulfil, while his subjects engaged to yield their obedience on condition of his fulfilling them; in this case, our judgment of William's character will be extremely different from what it was on the former supposition. We will not be satisfied with barely asserting his innocence of those crimes of which his enemies have accused him, but we will confer upon him the glorious appellations which his countrymen bestowed, of the father of his country, and the guardian of its liberty and laws, who generously sacrificed his interest, ease, and safety to the public good, and who, first by counsel and persuasion, and afterwards by force of arms, did more to rescue his fellow-citizens from oppression, than was ever done in such untoward circumstances by any patriot in the world before.

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THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
K I N G O F S P A I N.

B O O K XIX.

THE prince of Parma did not neglect the opportunity which the distress occasioned by the death of the prince of Orange afforded him, to persuade the confederated provinces to accept of peace. But their distrust of Philip, their attachment to the protestant faith, and the other causes mentioned above, still retained their influence, and rendered them averse from any reconciliation with a prince against whom their indignation was more inflamed than ever, by the cruel injury which they had lately suffered. They could attend to nothing now but how to prosecute the war with vigour, or to testify their respect for the memory of the prince of Orange.

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Temper and
disposition of
the States.

WILLIAM's eldest son, the count of Buren, was still a prisoner in Spain; and his second, prince Maurice^a, was engaged in the study of literature and

Prince Maurice.

^a Grandson, by the mother's side, of the celebrated elector of Saxony of the same name.

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and science at the university of Leyden. On this young man, who, at the time of his father's death, was only eighteen years old, of great hopes, and whose actions afterwards exceeded the most sanguine expectations of his countrymen, the States bestowed the greatest part of the dignities which which his father had enjoyed. Besides creating him high-admiral of the Union, they conferred upon him the government of Holland, Zealand, and Utrecht. And, in order to supply his want of experience, and secure his being early instructed in the military art, they appointed count Hohenloe, the most accomplished officer in their service, to be his lieutenant or deputy, till he should attain to greater maturity of years and understanding.

Reduction of
Brussels,
Ghent, &c.

FROM this conduct of the States, which proved that William's ascendant over them had not terminated with his life, Farnese perceived that it would be impossible to bring the war to a conclusion in any other way than by force of arms. Dismissing therefore all thoughts of peace, he proceeded with great activity in the military operations which he had begun in Brabant and Flanders; and his success was in proportion to the prudence and vigilance which he exerted. Besides the towns above mentioned, he had lately acquired Vilvorden and Dendremonde, but he had not yet reduced Ghent, Brussels, Mechlin, or Antwerp. To have proceeded separately against each of these places in the ordinary way of sieges, would have protracted the war to an excessive length. Instead of that method, he bethought himself of another, which was suggested by the situation of the several towns, and the nature of their resources. This was to make himself master of the banks of the rivers and canals on which they stood, while he sent out flying parties of horse to scour the adjacent country. And thus he not only put a stop to their trade, without which
they

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they could not subsist, but cut off all of them but Antwerp from every sort of communication with other places. For several months however the inhabitants declined entering into any terms of accommodation. But when they considered that, unless he were obliged to draw off his troops by the approach of a superior army, they must soon be reduced to the last extremity, their resolution failed, they began to listen more patiently to the exhortations which the secret partisans of Spain were daily sounding in their ears; and, at length, such of them as were situated in the more interior parts, first Ghent, and afterwards Brussels and Mechlin, resolved to return under the Spanish government, upon conditions to which Farnese had, on different occasions, shewn himself willing to agree.

Of these conditions, the most important were the following: "That the people should engage to acknowledge no other sovereign but the king of Spain: That no religion but the Roman catholic should be permitted, but that the protestants should be allowed to remain in the Netherlands for two years, in order to dispose of their effects: That a sum of money should be paid for defraying the expences of the war: That all past offences should be forgiven, and all the antient rights and privileges of the inhabitants restored and maintained inviolate."

In fulfilling his part of these conditions, Farnese not only acted with strict fidelity, but displayed a degree of lenity and moderation that was admirably calculated to promote his views. Of the fine of three hundred thousand crowns, to which the people of Ghent consented in their treaty of surrender, he demanded only two hundred thousand. And although in his act of indemnity six persons, more obnoxious than the rest, had been excepted, he required from them
only

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only a pecuniary fine. He was likewise at all times willing to listen to the complaints of the protestants, and to redress their grievances ^b.

Siege of Ant-
werp.

ALL the considerable towns in Brabant were now subdued, except Antwerp. The prince had early formed the resolution of laying siege to that important city; and some time before his acquisition of Ghent and Brussels, he had taken measures for beginning it. But in order to secure success, it was necessary that his utmost skill and strength should be exerted; and he now applied himself to the prosecution of his design, with all the anxiety, zeal, and industry, which an object of the highest consequence deserved.

ANTWERP was at this time not only the richest and most splendid, but likewise the strongest city in the Netherlands. As it lies extended along the banks of the Scheld, and the confederates still maintained their superiority at sea; it was thought to be sufficiently secured on one side by a strong wall which ran parallel to the river; and on the other sides it was fortified by ramparts of extraordinary strength, and a ditch filled with water, of such depth and breadth, as in the opinion of those times rendered it almost impregnable.

SUCH was the judgment formed of it by the prince of Parma, and on this account he did not intend to attempt reducing it by storm, but to have recourse to the slower method of blockade, which he knew must sooner or later prove successful.

ON the side towards the land, he found it extremely easy to render the blockade complete, as the States had no army able to contend with him in the field, and all the neighbouring towns were in

^b Meteren, p. 368.

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in his possession. But these circumstances he perceived would be of little advantage, while the besieged remained masters of the Scheld; and therefore, to deprive them of this resource, was the great object to which all his operations, during this celebrated siege, were directed.

THE people of Antwerp had penetrated into his design, and had omitted nothing in their power to prevent him from carrying it into execution. With this view they had constructed two forts, one on each side of the river, about three miles below the town; to one of which they gave the name of Lieffkenfoech, and to the other that of Lillo. Farnese judged it necessary to begin his operations with reducing these forts. He sent the marquis de Roubais against Lieffkenfoech, which stood on the Flanders side of the Scheld, while Mondragone laid siege to Lillo. Roubais found no great difficulty in fulfilling the general's intention with regard to Lieffkenfoech. But Mondragone's attempt on the fort of Lillo was not attended with the same success. This fort was valiantly defended by colonel Balfour, a Scotch officer of distinguished merit, and Teligny, the worthy son of the brave La Noue. After battering the ramparts for several days, Mondragone attempted to take the fort by storm, but was repulsed; and in his repulse, and a sally which the garrison had made some days before, he sustained the loss of no less than two thousand men.

UPON receiving intelligence of this disaster, the prince of Parma, after settling the government of the towns which he had lately conquered, came himself to view the scene of action. He found that all the time and pains and blood which had been spent in the siege of this fort had been misapplied; and perceived, that as it stood at some distance from the banks, it did not materially interfere

terfere with his plan for putting a stop to the navigation of their river.

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FOR this reason, instead of pushing the immediate reduction of it, he was satisfied with blockading it on the land-side, so as to prevent the excursions of the garrisons.

The prince
of Parma's
plan for
blocking up
the Scheld.

HAVING given instructions for this purpose, he called a council of his general officers, and laid before them his project for blockading up the Scheld, by building a bridge over it, to intercept the communication between the besieged city and the maritime provinces; an enterprise which, had it failed, would have exposed him to derision, but which shewed the boldness of his genius, and has contributed more than almost any other of his military achievements, to raise his character to that exalted rank which it holds in the annals of history.

By most of the officers this proposal was regarded as chimerical. For where, said they, can materials be found for so great an undertaking? And even if they should be found, yet how is it possible to transport them hither? By land-carriage, it is utterly impracticable; nor would it seem to be much easier by water, while the enemy possesses so great a superiority in naval force. Besides that, no beams, they observed, were of sufficient length to reach the bottom of the river.

To build a bridge of ships, they thought, would be equally impracticable, because he did not possess so great a number as was necessary, and it would be impossible to collect them from different places, in the face of a vigilant enemy, of superior merit and strength. And even allowing it were possible, either with beams or ships to construct such a bridge as was projected, yet it would be quickly destroyed by the ice, or by the tides and storms, or by the enemy.

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BUT Farnese, conscious of resources in the fertility of his genius, of which his officers could form no idea, was not discouraged by these objections. He considered that the measure on which he had resolved was the only one by which Antwerp could be reduced, and that till he should reduce it, and thereby get possession of a naval force, the towns lately acquired (which usually carried on their trade by the way of Antwerp) must suffer the greatest inconveniencies, and it would be in vain for him to attempt the conquest of the maritime provinces.

DETERMINED by these considerations, he proceeded instantly to make the preparations necessary for executing his design. Having first sounded the river, and measured its breadth in different places, he found, that between the village of Ordam in Brabant, and Caloo in Flanders, it was neither so deep nor so broad, as above or below. At this place therefore he resolved to build the bridge. And he began with raising two strong forts, opposite to each other on the different sides of the river, besides several redoubts, on which, as well as on the forts, he planted a great number of cannon, to defend the bridge when finished, and to protect the workmen while engaged in building it.

IN the mean time he ransacked all the country round for materials, and he had the good fortune to find at Dendremonde and Ghent, great quantities of every thing which he stood in need of. If he could have conveyed his materials down the Scheld to Caloo, a great expence of labour and time would have been saved. This he repeatedly attempted; but he soon found that it was impossible to escape the vigilance of the citizens, who being directed in all their operations by St. Aldegonde, lay in wait for his boats near Antwerp, and either took or destroyed them.

IN order to avoid the repetition of this disaster, Farnese made, on the Flanders side near Borcht, which stands higher than Antwerp, a large cut in the dike of the Scheld, by which he laid all the neck of land between Borcht and Caloo under water; opening an egress for the water by another cut near Caloo, and transporting his apparatus for the bridge across the inundation. This expedient rendered it unnecessary for his boats to pass by Antwerp, and they likewise arrived sooner at their destined port.

BUT St. Aldegonde having built a redoubt on the Brabant side, opposite to the cut at Borcht, and stationed some armed vessels to cruize there, soon rendered the passage as difficult as before. Farnese was therefore obliged to adopt another expedient, much more laborious than the former; but which he knew would certainly be attended with success. This was to dig a canal fifteen Italian miles in length, to join the inundation just now mentioned, with a little river which falls into the Scheld at Ghent. That he might finish this arduous undertaking the more speedily, he fixed his head-quarters at Beveren, in the neighbourhood of the canal, and was perpetually present himself, exhorting and encouraging the workmen; and sometimes taking the spade and pick-axe into his own hand. The work was finished with wonderful expedition, and fully answered his expectation. As the enemy could have no access either to the canal, or the river with which it communicated, he conveyed all necessary materials and engines from Ghent without opposition and immediately afterwards began the construction of the bridge.

Description
of the bridge

THE two extremities of this edifice were formed of huge beams, driven into the bottom of the river by the force of engines, and strongly bound together by other transverse cross beams. This part

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part of the work called the *stacados* or *estacades*, ran from each side of the river towards the middle of it, as far as the depth of the water would allow; which on the Flanders side was two hundred feet, and on the other, nine hundred. These *stacados* were only twelve feet broad, except towards the two extremities, next the centre of the river, where their breadth being encreased to forty feet, two forts were erected upon them, and furnished with artillery. The whole was covered at top with strong planks, and a parapet five feet high, of the thickest planks, was raised upon it for the security of the soldiers. A row of piles was then driven deep into the bottom of the river, parallel to each side of the *stacados*, at the distance of a few feet from them, and strongly fastened to the beams of which *they* were composed. Besides which, another row of long beams, pointed with iron, was placed horizontally a little above the surface of the water; stretching out to a considerable length from the bridge on both sides, so as to make it dangerous for ships to approach.

By this part of the work, the navigation of the river was considerably straitened; but as there was an open space in the middle, between the heads of the *estacades*, of more than one thousand two hundred and fifty feet, the enemy's ships taking advantage sometimes of the night, and sometimes of the wind and tide, continued, though not without loss, to pass and repass as formerly; and the city was still abundantly supplied with provisions. Farnese having from the beginning intended to fill up the intermediate space with ships, had with great difficulty collected two and thirty, which he judged to be a sufficient number. These vessels, after the masts had been taken out, were placed with their sides parallel to each other, at the distance of about twenty feet. They were strongly fastened together by chains, and were fixed in

N 2

their

their places by anchors at both ends, in such a manner that the sailors could shorten or lengthen the cables, as the tide either rose or fell. Over the intermediate spaces, strong beams went from one ship to another. Above these were laid planks; and the same sort of parapet was erected, as that which was raised on the stacados. Thirty soldiers and four sailors were put on board each ship, and all the ships were planted with artillery.

FOR the greater security of this part of the work, a flota one thousand two hundred feet long was constructed of barks, bound together in the same manner as the ships of which the bridge was formed, with the same sort of beams pointed with iron, resembling a file of pikes, stretching from that end of the barks which lay next to the enemy. These barks were filled with empty casks, to prevent them from being sunk, and were fixed in their place by anchors. Of this kind of flota, two were constructed, consisting each of two and thirty barks, one above, and the other below the bridge, at the distance of two hundred yards.

THIS stupendous work * furnished employment to the prince of Parma's fleet and army for more than half a year. Without a fleet of considerable strength it could not have been executed, and the procuring of this fleet in such disadvantageous circumstances, was one of the many striking proofs which Farnese exhibited on this occasion, of that extraordinary activity and enterprise by which his character is so eminently distinguished. With infinite labour and difficulty he had equipped, at Ghent and Dunkirk, forty armed vessels, and put them under the command of the marquis de Roubais; who being well supported by the forts and redoubts on the banks of the river, protected the workmen,

* It was finished February 1585.

workmen, in spite of the most vigorous efforts which the besieged could make to interrupt them.

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FARNESE however would not probably have succeeded in his enterprise, if the united States had exerted themselves with vigour, proportioned either to that of the enemy, or to the importance of the prize contested. It now appeared how great was the loss which the confederacy had sustained in the death of the prince of Orange. By William's superior rank, wisdom, and experience, some turbulent leaders had been restrained, who, after his death, indulged their factious, interested spirit, without regard to the pernicious consequences which might ensue. Among these was Treflong, whom the States had appointed commander of the fleet, destined for the relief of Antwerp. This man, whether from treachery or from private resentment, paid no regard to his instructions; but on different pretences, at first delayed putting the orders of the States in execution, and at last told them that he would not sail, unless some persons with whom he had quarrelled were removed from the magistracy. On this occasion, prince Maurice called an assembly of the States of the province, dismissed Treflong from his employment, and put him under arrest. The command of the fleet was then given to count Hohenloe; but the time in which its operations might have proved effectual, was past; and the bridge, with all its fortifications, as above described, was almost finished.

No words can express the astonishment which it excited in the minds of the besieged. At the commencement of the work, they had regarded it rather as an object of derision, than as fitted to excite any serious apprehension or alarm. Their anxiety and terror now were in proportion to their former confidence and security. They saw an

Consternation of the besieged.

an entire stop put to their trade in every quarter. They already felt many of the inconveniencies of a siege. Their imaginations represented, in the most dreadful light, the calamities which they were about to suffer; and persons of all ranks began to talk of the necessity of preventing them in time, by making their peace with the enemy. But they were diverted from forming any fixed resolution by St. Aldegonde, who employed all his eloquence and address to rouse their abhorrence of the Spanish yoke, and to inspire them with the hopes of being able to raise the siege,

Speech of St.
Aldegonde.

“ IT is not surprising, said he, in an assembly of those who held public offices in the town, that many of our fellow-citizens should tremble at the prospect of those hardships which usually attend a long continued siege. But while we cast our eyes forward to these, let us reflect on the calamities which we have reason to dread from a surrender. We have seen, within these few years, two memorable sieges, the siege of Haerlem, and that of Leyden. The people of Haerlem, rather than submit to the last extremities, chose to throw themselves on the mercy of the Spaniards. But how bitterly did they repent of their having done so? And how much better had it been to have fallen in the field of battle, than to suffer, as so great a number of the bravest did, that ignominious death to which they were doomed by the cruel Spaniard? The inhabitants of Leyden, on the other hand, resolved rather to die, than to deliver themselves up to such a perfidious enemy; and the consequence of their adhering to this resolution was, that the siege was raised, and a period put to all their miseries. Can we hesitate in deciding which of these examples we ought to follow? Is not death more eligible, than submission to

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to the dominion of an enemy, from whom we have endured such intolerable outrage?

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“ IF this city shall fall under the yoke of these oppressors, can we doubt that the citadel will be restored, and with it all the tyranny which they were wont to exercise? Will not our religion be proscribed, and the inquisition established? This illustrious city will then become a colony of Spaniards. Her commerce will be ruined, and her inhabitants obliged to wander in search of places of abode, forlorn and indigent. But why should I thus describe the disasters of a surrender? There is still no reason for despair. It is impossible that this bridge can stand long against the efforts which we will make for its destruction. Let us not therefore be wanting to ourselves; but with a fixt, unalterable purpose, let us embrace the glorious alternative of liberty or death.”

By these exhortations, joined to the respect in which his character was held, St. Aldegonde gained over the citizens to a perfect conformity with his sentiments; and persuaded them to renew the oath which they had formerly taken, never to return under the dominion of the king of Spain. An edict was then published, prohibiting all persons, under the severest penalties, from listening to any terms of accommodation that might be offered; after which they proceeded with redoubled ardour to put in practice such expedients as had been devised for the demolition of the bridge.

IN order to effectuate this, they had been for some time past employed in preparing fire-ships, under the direction of Giambelli, a celebrated Italian engineer, who appears to have been the author of this invention. They were formed of the thickest planks, and had each of them a mine or chamber

Preparations
of the be-
sieged for de-
molishing
the bridge.

chamber in the middle. This mine was built in the strongest manner, and filled with gunpowder, and with rugged stones, bullets, and such other weighty materials, rammed hard and close, on purpose to increase the resistance, and augment the force of the explosion.

THE citizens laboured at the same time in constructing a flat-bottomed vessel of extraordinary strength and size, with which they intended to attack the forts and redoubts on the banks of the river. This enormous machine was more properly a floating castle than a ship, and the town's people had, on account of the sanguine expectations which they conceived from it, given it the name of the "end of the war."

WHILE the people of Antwerp were thus employed, the confederates who lay at Lillo, under count Hohenloe, made a vigorous attack on the fort of Lieffkenfoech, and compelled the garrison to surrender. From Lieffkenfoech, they proceeded against another fort of the name of St. Antony, which they likewise reduced with the same facility. When intelligence was brought to the prince of Parma of their descent, he set out with a detachment of his army to oppose their progress, but both the forts had surrendered before he could arrive. Being enraged against the commanders of these forts, on account of their having made too feeble a resistance, he ordered them both to be beheaded on the dike of the Scheld, in sight of the enemy. He was the more concerned for the loss of Lieffkenfoech, as it gave the enemy free possession of the navigation of the river below the bridge, and thereby tended to facilitate the execution of any design which they might form for its destruction.

At first he imagined that the solicitude which the confederates had shewn for the recovery of
Lieffkenfoech,

Lieffkenfoech, had proceeded from their intending to make an attempt upon the lower side of the bridge. But it soon appeared, that their only view was to second the operations of the besieged, and to complete that ruin which they expected the explosion of the fire-ships would certainly produce.

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THESE vessels were sent down the river, with a favourable wind and tide, on the 4th of April. The Spaniards who had got some imperfect intelligence of their nature, were filled with the most anxious expectations. They knew them to be fire-ships from their unusual appearance, and were variously affected, according to the various conjectures which they formed of the effects that were about to be produced. But they were all alike prompted by curiosity, to witness a spectacle which had never been exhibited in any siege before. And the banks of the river, the forts and redoubts, and even the bridge itself were crowded with spectators.

OF several vessels which Giambelli had prepared, only two were constructed in the manner above mentioned, the one of which contained in its mine six thousand pounds of gun-powder, and the other, seven thousand five hundred pounds. One of them ran ashore before it reached the bridge. But the other being more fortunate in its direction, was driven towards that part of the bridge, where the stacado on the Flanders side was united to the ships. A number of the Spanish officers and soldiers had the courage to jump on board, in order to extinguish the train, which Giambelli had contrived in such a manner, as to require an hour before it could reach the mine. The prince of Parma had advanced a little way on the stacado, to wait for the event; but was prevailed upon by his officers to retire. He had scarcely

scarcely entered the neighbouring fort, when the explosion happened, with a noise more dreadful than the loudest thunder. A sudden darkness overspread the region round. The ground shook as in an earthquake. The river, disturbed in its course, was thrown over its dikes, and poured into the fort of Caloo with inconceivable violence. Not only such of the Spaniards perished as had ventured to go on board the fire-ships, but all those too who were upon the bridge, and many of those who stood upon the banks of the river. No language can describe the horror of the scene which presented itself after the smoke was dispelled. The bridge, and both the surface and the banks of the river, were covered with the dead and wounded; whose bodies were disfigured in a thousand hideous ways by the smoke and flames, and the various instruments of destruction with which the ship was stored. Eight hundred men were killed, and a great number maimed and dangerously wounded. Among the killed were many officers of distinction; but no person perished so deeply lamented by the prince of Parma, as the marquis de Roubais, the general of the horse; a nobleman distinguished by many shining accomplishments; brave, active, and expert both in the arts of peace and war; once an enemy of Spain; but who, prompted by jealousy of the prince of Orange, had abandoned the cause of liberty, and shewn for some years past no less zeal in reducing his countrymen under the Spanish yoke, than he had discovered formerly in asserting their independence. It was not only losses of this kind which the prince of Parma sustained on this occasion. The bridge likewise suffered considerable damage. Six of the ships which composed the middle part of it, were burnt; some were forced from their stations, and others turned with their keels uppermost, and dashed to pieces.

IF the confederates had improved the opportunity which this havock afforded them, the whole work might have been demolished; and in that case, a prediction of the prince of Orange would have been fulfilled, that if Farnese with so small an army should undertake the siege of Antwerp, it would prove his ruin. But, as was observed by the old experienced Mondragone, it appeared from many circumstances in the conduct of the confederates in this siege, that the prince of Orange was dead.

By some strange fatality, or some unaccountable inadvertence, or, as one historian insinuates, by a misunderstanding between the magistrates of Antwerp and the admiral of the Antwerp fleet, those fireships which had cost so great an expence of money, ingenuity, time, and pains, were sent down the Scheld before any concert had been formed with the confederates at Lillo; who were therefore unprepared to second that mighty effort which had been made for opening the navigation of the river.—Giambelli, though extremely solicitous to know the success of his invention, remained entirely ignorant of it for two days. A large reward was offered to those who should venture to go down the river for intelligence. But none had courage to advance far enough to make any certain discovery, nor did the citizens know any thing of what had happened till the third night after, when they received information of it by a messenger from count Hohenloe.

THE prince of Parma was in the mean time employed in repairing the bridge, and he exerted himself with so much activity and vigour, that it was made as strong as ever before the besieged were acquainted with the damage which it had sustained. His late experience suggested to him an alteration in the work, which was found afterwards of great importance: this was to remove the flotas, and to form that part of the bridge which was composed
of

of the ships, in such a manner that, in case the enemy should repeat their experiment, it might be opened at different places to let the fire-ships pass through and continue their course down the river.

Other attempts of the besieged.

THE spirits of the besieged were still supported by the sanguine hopes which they had conceived from that enormous vessel, which they called the end of the war. This huge machine was entirely the work of the citizens, and was not approved of either by Giambelli or St. Aldegonde. It was found, on trial, too unwieldy to answer the purpose for which it was intended. After planting the lower part of it with cannon, and filling the higher part with musketeers, they made an attack upon one of the Spanish redoubts; but they failed in their attempt, and the machine itself was so much shattered, as to be rendered almost unfit for future use.

AT Giambelli's desire, the senate of Antwerp had again recourse to their first expedient of fire-ships; but the enemy having learnt the nature of these machines, employed different means to render them ineffectual. They laid hold of them as soon as they appeared, and sometimes extinguished the trains, and sometimes dragged the vessels to the banks of the river, or through the openings in the bridge.

GIAMBELLI then bethought himself of another device, from which he believed that some more certain effect might be expected. Having bound together in one compacted body fifteen ships armed with pointed beams, and with scythes or falchions, for cutting the chains and cordage of the bridge, he sent them accompanied with fire-ships down the river when the wind and tide were combined and favourable. The shock which this contrivance produced was very great, but through the wise precaution which Farnese had taken, by making

making the openings just now mentioned, together with the unexampled boldness of his soldiers in laying hold of the fire-ships, the bridge received no greater damage than could be quickly repaired. Some other expedients were proposed by Giambelli, but the senate was deterred from adopting them, partly by the expence and time requisite to prepare his machines, and partly by the difficulty of mariners and soldiers willing to expose themselves to the danger with which the putting his inventions in practice would have been attended.

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THERE remained now for the besieged only one resource, to which, if they had given proper attention in the beginning, all the anxiety, expence and labour, which they bestowed in attempting to demolish the bridge, might have been saved. In order to form a clear conception of what will be said on this interesting part of the present subject, it is necessary to remember that the ground on the north side of the Scheld, between Antwerp and Lillo, is much lower than the rest of the country, and were it not for the dyke of the river would every tide be overflowed. This ground is generally covered with water in many places, but in other parts it furnishes pasture for a great number of cattle with which the Antwerp market is supplied. Through the middle of this plain there runs from the village of Couvestein, where the country begins to rise, to the great dyke of the Scheld, a smaller dyke, called the Counterdyke of Couvestein, which had been formed to serve for a road or causeway. The confederates at Lillo could, by opening the dyke of the Scheld, lay all the ground under water between Lillo and the counterdyke, while the besieged could, with the same facility, introduce the river into that part of the plain which lies between the counterdyke and Antwerp; and thus, by breaking down the counterdyke, the inundations on
each

The counterdyke of Couvestein.

each side of it could be united, and a free navigation opened between Antwerp and Lillo.

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THE reader will easily perceive, that while the bridge stood, the fate of Antwerp depended entirely on the counterdyke; and that, in case the confederates could make themselves masters of it, they might bid defiance to the prince of Parma, and without anxiety suffer him to retain possession of the bridge. If, in the beginning, they had believed it practicable for him to execute his design of blocking up the river, they could have fortified themselves on the counterdyke in such a manner, that with the assistance of the inundation, they would have baffled his most vigorous efforts to expel them. But they were deceived by the contempt which they entertained of his intended enterprise, and did not perceive their error in neglecting to occupy this important station till it was too late. The prince of Parma had already seized upon it, and taken every necessary precaution against the attempts which he doubted not they would sooner or later make to wrest it from him. He committed the charge of defending it to two of his most vigilant officers, Mondragone and Mansveldt. He ordered it to be made broader and higher than it was before. He strengthened it with piles of wood driven into it transversely, and he erected several forts upon it, besides planting redoubts on the dyke of the Scheld, with which he intended to take the enemy in flank, in case they should venture to approach.

THE confederates, however, despairing of being able to demolish the bridge, resolved, if possible, to dislodge him from the counterdyke. And their first attempt, after laying the ground on each side of it under water, was made in the beginning of May by count Hohenloe. That general had formed the plan of this attack in concert with St. Aldegonde, who was to have cooperated with him, and had agreed to set sail with the

the Antwerp fleet immediately after lighting up, on a tower in the city, three fires, as a signal of his departure. By a mistake of the person to whom the charge of this signal was committed, it was exhibited before the time, and through this untoward accident count Hohenloe was left alone in the execution of his enterprize. He conducted it however with vigour, and laid one of the forts and a part of the counterdyke in ruins; after which he thought it prudent to retire, and to reserve his forces unimpaired till the besieged should be ready to second his operations. This unfortunate attempt served only to rouse the prince of Parma to greater vigilance and exertion. Agreeably to his conjectures, he saw that the principal efforts of the enemy would henceforth be directed against the counterdyke: and, therefore, he not only applied himself with diligence to repair the damage which it had sustained in the late attack, but visited every day all the redoubts and forts, and reinforced the garrisons with chosen troops taken from the several nations of which his army was composed.

THE confederates at Lillo, and the people of Antwerp, were in the mean time indefatigable in making preparations for another attack. St. Aldegonde stood almost single in his opinion on this occasion, and endeavoured to convince his countrymen, that it would be easier for them to destroy the bridge itself, than to make themselves masters of the counterdyke, in opposition to an enemy so much upon their guard, and so strongly fortified. But having, since their disappointment with the regard to the effect of the fire-ships, been accustomed to consider the bridge as impregnable, they were deaf to whatever he could advance upon the subject, and he was obliged to concur (which he did with all his wonted activity) in the execution of that design of which the majority approved.

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Battle of the
counterdyke.

TOWARDS the end of May every thing was prepared both at Antwerp and Lillo that was thought necessary to secure success; and, on the 26th of that month, count Hohenloe, according to concert with St. Aldegonde, sailed from Lillo early in the morning, with a squadron of more than a hundred ships, having on board a numerous body of troops, under the command of the most experienced officers in the United Provinces^d. He resolved to make his attack at the broadest part of the counterdyke, between the two middle forts, called the fort of the Palisades and fort St. George, where there was room to intrench his troops. In order to facilitate his landing, he sent before him four vessels resembling fire-ships, with some trains of gunpowder, to which the soldiers, who were concealed within, set fire. This device produced the designed effect. The Spaniards taking the smoke and flame for the forerunners of an explosion, retired hastily from that part of the dyke to which they saw the vessels approaching. The confederates in the mean time advanced, and landed between seven and eight hundred men. The Spaniards soon discovered the artifice by which they had been deceived, and immediately returned to the station which they had left. An obstinate and bloody action ensued, while the contending parties were supported on the one side by the cannon of the fleet, and on the other by those of the forts on the counterdyke.

IN the midst of this contest St. Aldegonde arrived with the fleet from Antwerp, which was nearly as numerous as that from Lillo. The confederates being thus powerfully reinforced, kept possession of the ground which they had gained, and while some of them fought, others were employed in cutting the counterdyke, and in raising

^d Justin de Nassau, Iselstein, Fremin, Morgan, and Balfour.

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ing temporary defences of piles of wood, and sacks of earth and wool, against the fire of the enemy. The combatants being cooped up in a narrow space, every stroke and shot did execution. But they received continual supplies of fresh men from the ships and forts, and their courage was superior to every danger. Both St. Aldegonde and Hohenloe mingled with the combatants, and by their example and exhortations nourished the desperate and intrepid ardour of the soldiers. "This is the last difficulty, cried St. Aldegonde, which remains to be surmounted. Persist as you have begun, and Antwerp, that bulwark of our confederacy, will soon be delivered. Your liberty, your future safety, and every thing dear and sacred, depend on the success of your present enterprise. We have now no choice left but victory or death."

THE Spanish generals were at no less pains to animate *their* troops. Both Mondragone and Mansveldt, though worn out with age and the fatigues of a long continued warfare, displayed on this occasion the utmost intrepidity. Notwithstanding their most vigorous exertions, the confederates still maintained their ground. They twice repulsed the Italians and Spaniards. Of the materials which they had brought along with them, they raised a considerable bulwark against the enemy's artillery. They made several openings in the counterdyke, and were so confident of victory, that St. Aldegonde and count Hohenloe, after assigning to the several officers their respective stations, set sail for Antwerp in a ship which had passed through one of these openings, and entered the city in triumph. Their design, it is said, was to consult with the magistrates concerning some future measures which they thought necessary

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to

to be pursued. But what the particular motives were, which determined the commanders in chief to leave their troops at this crisis, is not told by the cotemporary historians; and we are left to suspect two men, of vanity and folly, whose general conduct furnishes not the smallest ground for so unfavourable an imputation. They were received at Antwerp with the highest transports of gratitude and joy, and the people flocked to the harbour, impatiently expecting the arrival of the supplies of provisions which they believed to be near at hand.

BUT this joy was of short duration: the prince of Parma was for some time ignorant of what had passed. Having watched all the preceding night, he had gone in the morning to his head-quarters at Beveren, and retired to rest; but being soon awaked by the noise of the guns, he selected a body of troops, and immediately marched to the place of action.

ON his arrival, he viewed with indignation the enemy in possession of the counterdyke. He rushed forward at the head of his battalion, and fighting, exclaimed, "Where, my fellow-foldiers, is now your wonted intrepidity? Are you not ashamed thus to yield to an enemy you have so often conquered, and in one hour to lose the fruit of all your labours? Let who will, follow me; I shall either die, or conquer." Having spoke these words, he advanced towards the enemy with a sword in one hand, and a buckler in the other. The danger to which he was exposed, inflamed his troops to a degree of madness. They returned to the charge with redoubled fury, and, in spite of the most intrepid resistance, they drove the confederates along the counterdyke, till they came to the place where their companions were intrenched: there they stopped. The dispute was desperate,
and

and the confederates, being reinforced with fresh troops from their ships, once more compelled the Spaniards to retire; but Farnese, whose ardour was unabated, still urging and impelling them, the attack was instantly renewed, and the Spaniards proved at last victorious.

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It was now only within their intrenchment that the confederates retained possession of the counter-dyke. The prince of Parma and his troops were aware of the difficulty which they must encounter, in attacking an intrenchment defended by men who from the beginning had displayed the most determined bravery; yet they boldly advanced amidst an incessant fire both from the ships and the intrenchment. Great numbers fell: still, however, they continued to advance; and whilst those who were in the rear maintained a constant fire upon the enemy, the foremost ranks were employed in demolishing the fortification.

This fortification was at the same time attacked, on the other side, by two battalions sent against it by count Mansveldt, the one consisting of Spaniards and the other of Italians, who vied with each other in giving the most conspicuous proofs of their contempt of danger. The leaders of these battalions, Capisucchi and Toralva, were the first who entered the intrenchment; and soon afterwards the troops under the prince of Parma entered it on the other side. The confederates, however, though thus deprived of all defence, still continued to fight desperately, till perceiving that the tide was going back, and that the ships were beginning to put off to a greater distance, while fresh Spaniards were pouring in upon them from both ends of the counterdyke, their courage failed, and they attempted to save themselves by getting on board their boats and ships.

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THE Spaniards, not satisfied with this victory, flung themselves from the counterdyke, and pursued the fugitives as far as the depth of the water would allow. No quarter was given to those whom they overtook. The counterdyke, and the water on both sides of it, were covered with the slain, and many fell with dishonourable wounds, who for several hours together had given incontestible evidence of the most heroic valour. The number of the killed on the side of the confederates, amounted to two thousand five hundred, and that on the other side, to one thousand. The recovery of the counterdyke was not the only advantage which Farnese derived from his present victory: he likewise got possession of more than thirty of the enemy's ships, with all the artillery and engineers that were on board. Immediately after which he proceeded to fill up the breaches in the counterdyke, and to repair the damage which his fortifications had sustained.

THE besieged, being thus cruelly disappointed in their hopes of deliverance, were overwhelmed with consternation and despair. By their late great exertions, their internal resources were exhausted, and they had little prospect of any foreign aid that could arrive in time to prevent the necessity of surrendering. They had not indeed as yet experienced those intolerable miseries which attend on famine in a place besieged; but they foresaw that ere long these miseries must certainly overtake them, and they considered, that to delay making peace with the enemy, could only serve to increase the difficulty of obtaining favourable terms. Such were the sentiments of great numbers of every condition, notwithstanding the solemn engagement under which they had lately come, of never submitting to the Spanish government. St. Aldegonde, and the other magistrates, laboured to remove their apprehensions, by assuring them, that not only their friends in the maritime

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maritime provinces were preparing forces to relieve them, but that the queen of England intended to exert herself in their behalf. St. Aldegonde himself appears to have been animated with this hope, and for several weeks it had the effect which he desired on the minds of the citizens; but their patience being at last worn out, they assembled in a tumultuous manner, and peremptorily required that ambassadors should be appointed to treat of a surrender. The magistrates, though extremely reluctant, found it necessary to comply with their request; and accordingly St. Aldegonde, and several others of the principal inhabitants, were sent to the Spanish camp.

THEY were received by the prince of Parma in the most gracious manner, and much more favourable terms of accommodation were offered, than they had reason to expect. Various motives concurred in determining this prudent general to act on the present occasion with the utmost degree of moderation which the king's instructions would allow; for, besides that the granting of equitable conditions to the citizens of Antwerp would contribute to facilitate his future conquests, he considered, that his troops had suffered great diminution since the commencement of the siege; that, by accidents which he could not foresee, the bridge might be demolished; that he had with much difficulty resisted the efforts which the confederates had already made; that still greater exertions were to be apprehended from despair; and that the besieged, if compelled by severity to imitate the example of Haerlem or Leyden, might resist his most strenuous endeavours to reduce them, till the queen of England, who was deliberating on the subject, should resolve to espouse their cause.

Capitulation
of Antwerp.

MOVED

MOVED by these considerations, Farnese shewed himself not only willing, but even desirous to bring the treaty of surrender speedily to a conclusion; but the ambassadors of the besieged, still flattering themselves with the hopes of assistance, studied to put it off as long as possible; nor was the capitulation signed till within three days of the time when the whole stock of provisions in the city would have been consumed. This circumstance had been carefully concealed from the citizens, as well as from the prince of Parma, and was known only to the magistrates and masters of police. It had not therefore the smallest influence on the terms of peace, which were as favourable now as if the surrender had been made some months before.

IN some respects they were more favourable than even those which had been granted to Ghent and Bruges. Whereas the protestants of these places had been permitted to continue only two years, in order to settle their affairs; in Antwerp, they were allowed to remain four; and although Antwerp was much richer than any of the other cities, and the expence of the siege had been infinitely greater, yet he demanded a fine of only four hundred thousand guilders for the payment of his troops. All the prisoners were set at liberty; all past offences were forgiven, and no exception whatever was made in the general act of indemnity; nor was any personal restriction laid upon any of the citizens, except St. Aldegonde, who was required to engage, that he would not carry arms against the king of Spain for the space of a year. This circumstance had the appearance of a punishment inflicted on this distinguished patriot; but it ought to be considered rather as a mark of respect and honour, since it implied an acknowledgment of his superior merit,

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merit, and discovered the dread which his enemies entertained of his abilities.

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NOTWITHSTANDING this public testimony which St. Aldegonde received from the Spaniards, he was accused of having delivered up the town without necessity; and so rash and ill-informed were the States of Holland and Zealand on this occasion, that they forbade him to take up his residence within their territories. Being conscious of having acted with perfect integrity, he paid no regard to their interdiction, but soon after the surrender set out for Zealand, where he required the States to produce his accusers, and to try him openly^g; and, as no accuser ever ventured to appear, he published a vindication of his conduct, calculated to put his enemies to silence, and to shew that, instead of censure, he had merited the highest praise^h.

THE ill-humour which the maritime provinces discovered on this occasion, in their injurious treatment of a person so beloved and popular as St. Aldegonde, occasioned the error of those who asserted that these provinces were not displeased that the Spaniards had got possession of Antwerp, and that their jealousy of that commercial city was the cause why they did not exert themselves with greater vigour to preserve it. As the circumstances above explained seem to afford a full account of their inactivity in the beginning of the siege, so, towards the close of it, it should seem they did every thing for the relief of the besieged, which they could have done in their own defence. The only

^g The account here given is taken from Meteren, the best informed of all the historians in matters relative to Antwerp. It differs materially from that of Reidanus.

^h Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. iii. Meteren, lib. xii. Thuanus, lib. lxxxiii. Reidanus, lib. iv.

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only object of their dread at this time was the power of Spain. They could not but consider Antwerp as a bulwark against that power, and they could not foresee those commercial advantages, which they derived afterwards from the reduction of that wealthy city under the Spanish yoke.

Brabant deserted by many of its inhabitants.

THEY soon experienced these advantages, by the removal of so great a number of the inhabitants of Brabant and Flanders to Amsterdam and Middleburg that it became necessary to extend the walls of those cities in order to contain them. And thus the trade of the confederated States was greatly augmented, while that of the southern provinces received a wound, of which it never afterwards recovered. The prince of Parma had provided carefully against this event, so fatal to the prosperity of his late acquisitions, by the length of time which he allowed to the protestants for disposing of their effects, and by the mildness of his administration; but, besides that their aversion to the Spanish government was become unconquerable, and that for some years past they had tasted the sweets of liberty, they were too sincerely attached to the reformed religion, to bear the thoughts of ever complying with the catholic, or even to indure those restraints to which it behoved them during their stay at Antwerp to submit. Philip's bigotry had, in the time of the duke of Alva, transplanted great numbers of his subjects, together with their wealth and manufactures, into foreign states, and it now increased the power of the revolted provinces, at the expence of those which had returned to their allegiance. The Dutch began, not long after this period, to push their commerce to a greater extent than ever. They were more able than formerly to support the

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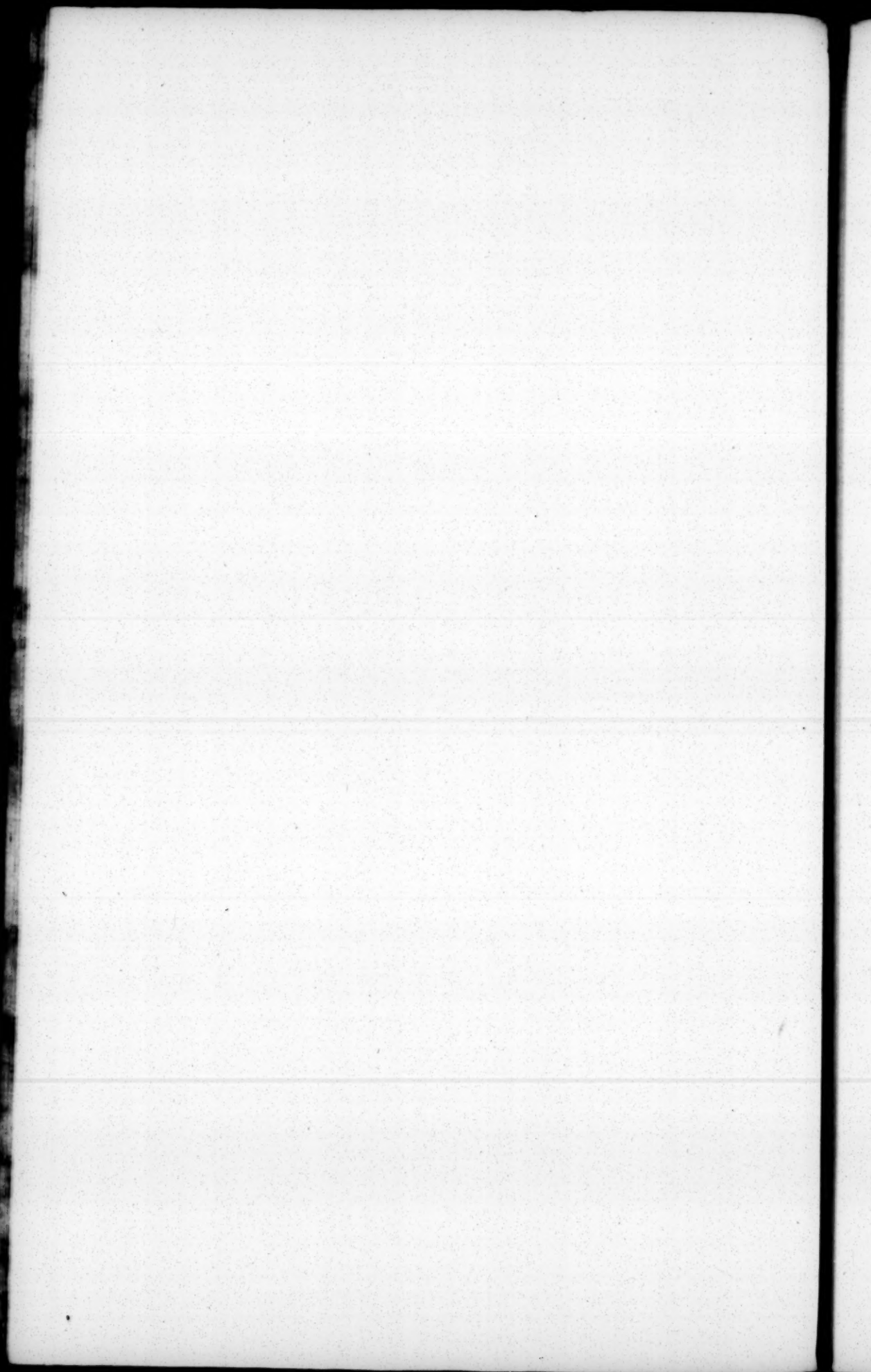
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the burden of the war; and in a few years afterwards they found themselves in a capacity, not only to defend their infant state, but to attack their powerful adversary, with splendor and success, in the most distant regions of the globe.

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T H E



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OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND,
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ALTHOUGH the prosperity of the United Provinces was, in the issue, greatly augmented by that increase of inhabitants which they received from the conquered towns, yet, at the present period, their situation was more alarming and critical than it had ever been since the commencement of the war. The prince of Parma was an enemy more formidable in every respect than the duke of Alva: superior to him in military, and still more in political abilities; and the more to be dreaded by the confederacy, on account of the moderation and equity which he displayed in his treatment of the people, who had submitted to his arms. Almost the whole of Brabant and Flanders, except Sluys and Ostend, was already conquered; and by his reduction of Antwerp, he had acquired a numerous fleet, which he knew well how to make subservient to the operations of his land forces, in the further prosecution of the war.

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State of the
United Pro-
vinces.

THE

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They offer
the sovereignty
to the king of
France.

THE States were more sensible than ever of their inability to defend themselves, without the assistance of some foreign power. In their treaty with the duke of Anjou, they had discovered great solicitude in guarding against the annexation of the provinces to the crown of France; but soon after the death of the prince of Orange, they were persuaded, that with their most strenuous efforts it would be impossible for them long to preserve their independence, and that they must either submit to Philip, or become the subjects of some other sovereign, possessed of power sufficient to defend them. Having towards the conclusion of the year one thousand five hundred and eighty-four, deliberately matured on the subject, they hesitated for some time between the king of France and the queen of England; but they came at last to fix their choice upon the former, partly because they believed it would be easier for Henry, than for Elizabeth, to support them; and partly because, at Henry's death, his crown would devolve to the king of Navarre, in whose hands they believed that both their religion and liberty would be secure.

THAT the offer which they resolved to make to the French monarch would be readily accepted, they could not doubt, when they considered that the principal reason why he had formerly declined to espouse their cause, was their refusing to consent to his succession, in the event of his brother's death. They could not but suppose that his ambition would be highly flattered with the opportunity of making so great an addition to his hereditary dominions; and they were not ignorant of the resentment which he bore towards the king of Spain, who, under the mask of friendship, had long fomented the troubles of his kingdom.

HENRY was not insensible to the force of these incentives. He gave the ambassadors whom the
States

States had sent to him on this occasion, the most gracious reception; assured them of his gratitude for the trust and confidence which the States were pleased to repose in him; and bad him rely upon him for every mark of friendship in his power to bestow. But as their proposal was of too much importance to be hastily embraced, he desired they would deliver it in writing, that it might be submitted to the revival of his counsellors.

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HENRY would not have thus delayed giving them a decisive answer, if he had been at liberty, either to pursue his own inclinations, or to consult the interest of France. Peace indeed had been established between the inveterate factions, into which his kingdom was divided; and the catholic league was apparently extinct. But the causes to which that pernicious confederacy owed its birth, still subsisted; and it required a much more dexterous and steady hand than that of Henry, to guide the reins of government in such a manner as to prevent the passions of the parties from breaking out again with as much violence as before. Henry duke of Guise, son of the celebrated Francis, was superior to his father in exterior accomplishments, and not inferior to him either in military or political abilities. Like his father too, he was actuated with the most inordinate ambition; and could not endure that insignificance, to which the king's aversion to his bold aspiring character had reduced him. Enraged at being excluded from the government of the state, while all the power which he and his adherents had formerly enjoyed was engrossed by the minions of the king, he resolved either to compel Henry to redress his grievances, or to deprive him of his crown. With the most indefatigable industry he applied himself to the prosecution to his design. His emissaries were spread every where; the kingdom swarmed with anonymous letters; and the pulpit resounded with the imminent danger to which

State of
parties in
France.

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which the church was exposed. "For the king, it was said, notwithstanding his pretensions to sanctity, had neither no religion at all, or was secretly attached to that of the Hugonots; for whom he had in his late treaty with them, discovered the most unjustifiable partiality. This alone was sufficient to rouse the indignation of every faithful son of the church; but there was ground for the most alarming apprehensions, when it was considered, that the duke of Anjou being now dead, and the king without any hopes of issue, the crown must (if the people did not exert themselves with vigour to prevent it) be inherited by the king of Navarre, a relapsed heretic, and a determined enemy of their holy faith^a."

The catholic
league.

By these means the duke of Guise united more than one half of the kingdom in a fanatical, but firm confederacy, with which he hoped to controul, and in time to annihilate the authority of the king. In order to gain greater respect to this confederacy, he placed at the head of it Charles, cardinal^b of Bourbon, a zealous catholic, far advanced in years, and noted for the weakness of his understanding. Guise intended this prelate for Henry's successor, in the event of the death or deposition of that prince; and he expected under him to engross the whole administration, and to pave the way for his own accession to the throne.

THE king of Spain was not an unconcerned spectator of these transactions, in a kingdom, to the affairs of which he had, for several years, given the most particular attention. For, besides the deep concern, which, agreeably to his general system of politics, he had ever taken in all the contests between the catholics and protestants in almost every European state, he was greatly interested

^a Memoires de la ligue, tom. iii.^b Uncle to the king of Navarra.

terested to prevent the king of Navarre (whose dominions he held unjustly) from ascending the throne of France; and there was no other means, he knew, by which he could deter the French monarch from lending assistance to the United Provinces, but to furnish him with employment at home.

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MOVED by this last consideration, he had given assistance to the league, when it was first formed by the same factious leaders some years before. He was now more determined than ever to support it; prompted partly by the motives that have been mentioned, and partly by this consideration, that by fomenting the disturbances in France, he would exhaust the strength of that mighty monarchy, and thereby either acquire possession of it himself, or be at least delivered from all dread of that power, which he believed to be the only one in Europe able to counteract his designs.

His views.

HAVING some time before the present period revived his negotiations with the duke of Guise, and the other heads of the league, he gave orders to his commissioners, Morreo, and Baptista Tassi, to form an alliance with them, without delay. And it was accordingly concluded between the Spanish envoys on the hand, and the dukes of Guise and Mayenne, and the sieur de Menneville, agent for the cardinal of Bourbon, on the other, at Joinville, on the 2d of February, one thousand five hundred and eighty-five, upon the following conditions:

His treaty
with the
duke of Guise

“THAT in case the present king of France should die without male-issuë, the cardinal of Bourbon should, as first prince of the blood, be declared king; and all those persons excluded from the succession, who were either heretics themselves or favourers of heretics.

“THAT

“THAT the cardinal of Bourbon should, in the event of his succeeding to the crown, ratify the peace of Chateau-Cambresis, between the courts of France and Spain.

“THAT he should prohibit the exercise of every religion but the catholic, within his dominions.

“THAT he should restore to Philip all the places which had been taken from him by the Hugonots, and assist him in subduing his rebellious subjects in the Netherlands.

“THAT, on the other hand, Philip should contribute fifty thousand crowns a month, for the support of the confederacy, besides assisting it with a sufficient number of troops, till heresy should be utterly extirpated. That he should take the cardinal of Bourbon, the lords of the house of Guise, and all others who should accede to the league, under his protection; and that neither of the contracting parties should enter into any treaty with the king of France, without mutual consent.”

BESIDES these conditions, which were committed to writing, and subscribed, Philip engaged to pay annually the sum of two hundred thousand crowns to the duke of Guise, to be disposed of by him as he should judge most conducive for the interest of the league. And it was agreed, that this whole transaction should be concealed, till a more convenient season for divulging it.

HENRY, however, received intelligence of the congress; and from former experience it was easy for him to conjecture the purpose for which it had been held. Soon after this, the embassy from the States of Holland arrived, and was received in the manner above mentioned. Mendoza, the Spanish resident, could not be ignorant of what had passed at Joinville; yet he complained to Henry of his kind reception of the Dutch ambassadors, as
being

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being inconsistent with the friendship which he owed to the catholic king. Henry replied to this complaint, with a degree of firmness and dignity, which it had been happy for himself, and for his subjects, if he could have maintained uniformly in his conduct. "I do not, said he, consider the people of the Netherlands as rebels, but as men whose patience has been worn by oppression. Humanity and justice incline me to take an interest in the distress of a neighbouring nation, once subject to the crown of France. I have not however as yet resolved to concern myself in their affairs. I am unwilling to violate that peace which subsists between your master and me; although I know, that, on his part, it has been violated. My resolution will appear, when I shall think fit to disclose it. In the mean time I desire it may be remembered, that I shall not be intimidated by the threats of the king of Spain; and that I am master of my conduct, and at liberty, without being answerable to any other prince, to make either peace or war, as I incline."

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AMONG Henry's counsellors there were some who exhorted him to embrace so tempting an opportunity as the present, of advancing the glory of his crown. The perplexed situation of his affairs, they said, ought rather to determine him to enter into foreign war, than to deter him from engaging in it. It would prove the most effectual remedy for those noxious humours with which his kingdom was distempered, by giving a new direction to that restless spirit with which his subjects had long been actuated; and it would be found the surest method of disappointing the designs of the duke of Guise, by depriving him of the assistance of the catholic king, to whom it would furnish sufficient employment in defence of his own dominions.

Henry hesitates as to accepting he proffered sovereignty.

SUCH was the reasoning of those who advised Henry to accept of the sovereignty of the United Provinces. It was plausible, but not substantial or solid. "For where," said others of his counsellors, seconded by the queen-mother, "can troops be found in France sufficient to carry on a war against an enemy so powerful as the king of Spain? Upon such of the catholics as are in league with that monarch, the king can have no reliance. On the contrary, they would unite with Philip against their native sovereign. To compose an army of such catholics as retain their fidelity, and to send that army to the Netherlands, would be to abandon the kingdom naked and defenceless to the duke of Guise. And were the king to apply to the protestants for assistance, what purpose would that measure serve, but to excite an universal alarm, and to determine all the catholics in the kingdom to accede to the league?"

He declines
accepting it.

HENRY could not resist the force of these arguments. Finding himself therefore thus fettered by his factious subjects, he resolved, though with much reluctance, to decline the tempting offer which the States had made to him; and having called their ambassadors, he informed them that the unhappy situation of his domestic affairs rendered it impossible for him at present to accept of their offer, or to undertake their protection; but that he would not fail to recommend their cause to the queen of England in the warmest manner^c.

Anxiety of
the queen of
England.

ELIZABETH had formerly approved of their election of the duke of Anjou, and had even contributed her endeavours to promote it. But she dreaded the union of the provinces with France, as an event which would have raised the maritime power of that kingdom to a superiority above her own,

^c Reidan, lib. iv. D'Avila, lib. vii. Van Meteren, lib. xii. p. 376.

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own, and therefore she had regarded, with a jealous eye, their making a tender to Henry of their sovereignty. No sooner was she informed of his resolution to decline accepting it, than her anxiety taking another direction, she dreaded that their despair would induce them to throw themselves on the mercy of their former sovereign, whose severest vengeance, she could not doubt, would be poured out upon her, as soon as his affairs in the Netherlands were composed.

IN order to prevent this effect of Henry's refusal, which was a more immediate object of her dread, than any consequence that could have arisen from his acceptance, she sent an ambassador to rouse their drooping spirits, and to give them hopes of her protection. The States were encouraged, by this mark of her attention, to form the resolution of making the same offer of their sovereignty to her, which they had made to the king of France: and ambassadors were accordingly appointed, and sent over to England in the month of July 1585.

The States
make her an
offer of the
sovereignty.

THESE ambassadors employed every argument which they could devise, to prevail upon Elizabeth to yield to their desire. After testifying in the strongest terms that gratitude with which the States were penetrated, on account of the favour which she had already afforded them; they represented, "That they had now more occasion than ever for her friendship, and must sink under the power of Philip, who possessed such inexhaustible resources, if she did not speedily interpose in their behalf. But although the power of the confederacy was small, when compared with those mighty efforts which were made by the king of Spain to enslave it, it was not unworthy of the queen's attention and regard. Besides possessing some important towns in Brabant, Flanders, and Guelderland,

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they

they were still in possession of Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, and Friesland, in which there were many flourishing and well fortified cities, capacious harbours, and navigable rivers, from which the queen's subjects would derive infinite advantage in the way of commerce; not to mention that, by the accession of so numerous a fleet as that of the United Provinces, her navy would be able to give law to all the maritime powers in Europe. They were far from supposing that interest alone would determine the queen to regard their present application; they had already experienced her generosity, and they now addressed her as the sovereign of a powerful kingdom, who had shewn that she was touched with their calamities. It was their earnest desire at this time, that she would accept of the sovereignty of the provinces, upon the same conditions on which their native princes had enjoyed it, and that she would henceforth consider the people of the Netherlands as her faithful subjects, who would vie with those of her native kingdom in demonstrating their attachment to her person, and in advancing the glory of her reign."

ELIZABETH received this proposal with much complacency, and assured the ambassadors, that they should not return without carrying such an answer along with them as would entirely satisfy the States; but before she could be more particular in her reply, she must consider the affair with that attention which it deserved, and hear the opinions of her counsellors.

She deliberates on the subject.

THE same thing happened on this occasion in the court of England, as in that of France some months before. Elizabeth's ministers were no less divided in their sentiments than those of Henry, and formed their judgments as courtiers are wont to do in matters of doubtful issue, conformably either to the natural temper of their mind, or to the inclination of the prince.

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THERE were some among them who thought, that both justice and prudence required that Elizabeth should reject the offer that had been made to her; “for it was the common interest of princes, they said, that subjects should be retained in their allegiance; and to encourage them in the violation of it, was in reality to undermine the foundations of their own authority. The queen had hitherto favoured the inhabitants of the Low Countries, not as a free and independent nation, but as a people who were cruelly oppressed; and her intention had not been to enable them to renounce their allegiance, but to induce their king to treat them with greater equity and moderation. In this purpose they thought she might still persist. But to acknowledge the States for sovereigns, and to accept from their hands that sovereignty which belonged to another, would not only be a violation of that justice which princes owe to one another, but might be attended with the most dangerous consequences to her own repose. The king of Spain would not rest satisfied till he had retaliated so great an injury. The state of Ireland, and even that of England, where there was so great a number of catholics devoted to his service, would furnish him with means of executing his design. And from fomenting a spirit of division among her subjects, he would soon pass to an open invasion of her kingdom. With *his* arms the spiritual thunder of the Roman pontiff would co-operate, and in that case such a number of enemies might be excited against her, as would endanger the stability of her throne.”

BUT others of Elizabeth’s counsellors were of opinion, that so inviting an opportunity as the present ought not to be neglected, and that the queen could not, with reason, be accused of injustice for embracing it. The States, compelled by necessity, had, several years before the present period, assumed the sovereignty into their own hands,

hands, and since that time they had conferred it upon the duke of Anjou, whom the queen had virtually recognized for their lawful sovereign. The king of Spain had clearly forfeited his right to their obedience, by his violation of all the conditions on which that right was founded. "Notwithstanding this, he will no doubt be highly offended," continued they, "if the queen shall think fit to listen to the present application. But can he be more an enemy to the queen, than he has already shewn himself? Has he not long endeavoured to stir up her disaffected subjects in Ireland? And in England, does he not pursue the same hostile and insidious designs? Has he not warmly espoused the cause of the queen of Scots? Does he not on every occasion shew himself an implacable enemy to the English name? And what is it that has so long prevented him from declaring open war, but that his revolted subjects in the Netherlands have hitherto afforded full employment to all the forces which he could spare from his ambitious enterprises? When he shall have disengaged himself from his embarrassments in the Low Countries, can we doubt that he will turn his arms against the queen? It is the part of prudence to provide against a distant as well as against an immediate danger; and prudence and a regard to self-preservation require that the queen should to the utmost of her power support the people of the United Provinces, because in their preservation the peace and security of her own dominions are involved. If she reject the application of the States, and either give them no assistance, or such only as has hitherto been granted, they will soon be overpowered, and Philip will then be not only at greater leisure, but much more able than at present to execute his designs. But if the queen accept of the advantageous offer that is made to her, and exert herself with vigour in defence of this people, who desire to become her subjects,

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subjects she will encounter her enemy at a distance from home, she will be powerfully assisted by a brave and determined ally, and with her fleet acting in concert with that of the States, she will be able to maintain the tranquillity of her kingdom."

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ELIZABETH readily perceived the force of this reasoning: she believed that an open breach with Philip was unavoidable, and she thought it more eligible to begin hostilities herself now, than to wait till her adversary should be in a condition to execute his designs against her. She resolved however to decline accepting the sovereignty which the States had offered her, either because she apprehended that it would prove a greater burden than she was able to support, or because she was afraid of exciting the jealousy of the neighbouring powers. But while for these reasons she desired that the supreme authority might still remain in the hands of the States, she resolved to afford them her protection; and with this view, after having received particular information concerning their strength, and the number of troops necessary for carrying on the war, she concluded a treaty with them, of which the principal articles were those which follow: "That the queen should furnish the States with five thousand foot and one thousand horse, to be commanded by a protestant general of her appointment, and to be paid by her during the continuance of the war. That after the conclusion of the war the States should repay her expences, and that the towns of Brille and Flushing, and the fort of Rammekins, should be immediately delivered to her, and should remain in her possession till she were fully reimbursed. That the commander of the forces, the governors of provinces and towns, and all the officers and foldiers, should take an oath of fidelity to the queen and the States. That in case it should be found

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found expedient to employ a fleet in the common cause, the States should furnish the same number of ships as the queen, to be commanded by an English admiral. That the commander in chief, and two English ministers residing in the Netherlands, should be admitted into the assembly of the States. That none of the rights or privileges of the confederated provinces should be violated, and no change introduced in the established religion or government. And lastly, That neither of the two contracting parties should, without mutual consent, make peace, or enter into alliance with the king of Spain^d.

Leicester appointed commander in chief.

THIS treaty was no sooner ratified, than Elizabeth issued orders for carrying it into execution. The earl of Leicester (to whom this wise princess had been long attached in a degree which far exceeded his merit and services) was appointed general of the forces, and went over with them to Holland in the beginning of the year 1586, accompanied by more than five hundred gentlemen, who intended to serve under him as volunteers. Leicester had neither courage, capacity, moderation, nor integrity, to qualify him for the arduous task that was assigned to him, but his defects were concealed under the glare of superficial accomplishments; with which, as he had long deceived the penetration of Elizabeth, he now imposed upon the people of the Netherlands, and excited in them the most flattering and delusive hopes. From his first arrival they regarded him as the restorer of their fallen state, and profusely heaped upon him every mark of honour which their immoderate fondness could devise. Not satisfied with receiving him rather as a prince and a conqueror, who had already wrought their deliverance, than as the subject of an ally by whom he had been sent to their assistance, they conferred upon him the offices

^d Bentivoglio, partii. lib. v. Camden, ann. 1585.

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fices of governor general of the confederacy, and commander in chief of all their forces by sea and land.

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By this precipitate measure, of which they had afterwards the greatest reason to repent, they intended to gratify the queen, and if possible to induce her to take a deeper interest in their affairs. But they were exceedingly disappointed in their expectations; she was offended at their artifice, and immediately dispatched her vice-chancellor^e to complain of their conduct, as being calculated to make the world believe her insincere in the declaration which she had published, of intending only to assist the provinces, and not to undertake the absolute charge of their protection. She desired that the States would recall that authority which they had conferred on Leicester, and commanded him to rest contented with the portion of power which she had given him. But it is extremely doubtful whether Elizabeth was in reality as much incensed on this occasion as she appeared to be. She soon discovered an unwillingness to mortify her favourite's vanity and ambition; lent a favourable ear to the apology that was made to her by the States, and did not insist on a compliance with her request. Whatever was her motive for this conduct, Leicester was installed in the government, and invested with the most ample powers; after which he proceeded to make preparations for putting a stop to the progress of the Spanish arms.

THE prince of Parma, on the other hand, was no less active in preparing for the further prosecution of the war. After the acquisition of so many important towns, he had conceived the most sanguine expectations of being able soon to complete

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complete the reduction of the revolted provinces. But by the interposition of Elizabeth he perceived his victory snatched from him, when he thought himself upon the point of reaping it, and was exceedingly disappointed and chagrined. Finding himself however still superior to his enemy in the field, he resolved to improve this advantage, and as soon as the season would permit, to proceed with his wonted vigour.

The siege of
Grave.

THE confederates had, notwithstanding their loss of Maestricht above related, been able to keep possession of two considerable towns on the Maese, Grave in Brabant, and Venlo in Guelderland. Farnese was desirous to make himself master of these two places before he should turn his arms against the northern provinces; and early in the spring he sent count Charles of Mansveldt to form the blockade of Grave. Mansveldt executed his commission with little opposition, by casting a bridge over the Maese, and by building forts and redoubts not only on the dykes of the river, but on the land side of the town, where he pitched his camp, and cut off all communication between the besieged and the country behind them. The town was defended by an English garrison, under the command of a young nobleman, baron de Hemeret, a native of Guelderland. Leicester sensible that the place was of the greatest importance for preventing the enemy from advancing into the provinces of Guelderland and Utrecht, went himself as far as the city of Utrecht, and from thence sent count Hohenloe and colonel Norris with two thousand five hundred foot, partly natives and partly English, to the relief of the besieged. The natives arrived first, and having taken one of the Spanish forts on the banks of the Maese, opposite to Grave, they had begun to fortify themselves upon the dyke, when Mansveldt having received intelligence of their arrival,

sent

sent three thousand Spaniards over the bridge already mentioned. By these troops the confederates were compelled to abandon their fortifications, and to retire along the dyke; but Norris and the English forces coming up to their assistance, a bloody battle ensued. The English, though long inured to peace, gave proof on this occasion of that strong military genius by which they have so often distinguished themselves in their wars upon the continent. They drove the veteran Spaniards before them with irresistible impetuosity, killed several hundreds of them, besides seven captains, and a great number of inferior officers, and compelled them to continue their retreat till they reached their fortifications on the bridge. There they were supported by fresh troops sent by Mansveldt from the camp. The battle was renewed, and both parties fought for some time with the same fury as before, till they were separated by a violent storm of wind and rain, which rendered all their efforts ineffectual. Through this accident the Spaniards still retained possession of the bridge, but the rain which fell, furnished count Hohenloe with the means of relieving the besieged. The river being swelled to an uncommon height, he broke down the dyke near Ravestein, which stands on the same side with Grave, and having laid all the country between Ravestein and Grave under water, he conveyed to the besieged, ammunition, provisions, and a supply of troops, across the inundation.

THE prince of Parma, alarmed with this success of the confederates, set out for Grave with his main army; and in a few days after his arrival before the place two batteries were planted, and a part of the wall was demolished. It might still however have been defended for a considerable time; and De Hemeret, the governor, gave the earl of Leicester the strongest assurances that he would

would hold out to the last. But his courage failing, he began to talk of the necessity of surrendering; and, although only two or three of his officers approved of his design, while all the rest remonstrated against it as cowardly and dishonourable, he resolved to put it in execution; and upon the 7th of June, before the breach was practicable, or the enemy had taken any measures for an assault, he sent to the prince of Parma a proposal to capitulate. The prince readily granted him the most favourable conditions, and suffered him and the garrison to march out with their arms and baggage. But as De Hemeret was undeserving of this honour, he soon had reason to repent of the infamous part into which his cowardice had betrayed him. Both he and the officers who had concurred with him, were condemned by a court martial to be beheaded. The sentence was acknowledged to be just, yet De Hemeret's fate excited great commiseration in his countrymen. He was too young for the important trust which had been committed to him; there was no reason to suspect him of treachery or corruption, and he solicited in the most earnest manner to have his life spared, and to be permitted to engage in some perilous enterprize in which he might retrieve his honour. But Leicester thinking it necessary at this time, for the establishment of military discipline, which had been greatly relaxed, to give an example of severity, rejected all the applications which were made in his behalf^f.

Siege of
Venlo.

IMMEDIATELY after the surrender of Grave, Farnese led his army, amounting to twenty thousand foot and three thousand horse, to besiege Venlo; and he made the greater haste in his expedition against that place, the only one on the left side of the Maese which remained in the hands of the confederates, as he understood that the garrison

^f Meteren, p. 403. Bentivoglio, p. ii. lib. ii. and Strada.

garrison was weak, and that the celebrated Martin Schench, who commonly resided in it, had, by Leicester's orders, marched with the greatest part of his troops to secure the town of Gueldres. This man, a native of Guelderland, and a soldier of fortune, is celebrated by all the cotemporary historians, on account of his extraordinary valour, activity, and enterprize. Having first attached himself to the Spanish party in the Netherlands, he performed for that party several important services, but thinking himself dishonoured by a preference which the general bestowed on a Spanish officer, he had deserted to the States. Schench no sooner heard that the Spanish army had begun the siege of Venlo, than he set out with a body of horse in order to throw himself into the place. Finding it completely invested on every side, he attacked the besiegers in the middle of the night, and having penetrated beyond the general's tent, he continued to advance till he had almost reached one of the gates of the town; but he could not enter, by reason of certain barricades which Farnese had raised to prevent the sallies of the garrison. Before he had time to demolish these, the whole camp was up in arms, and obliged him to abandon his attempt. He fought his way back through the thickest of the enemy, and escaped with the loss of between forty and fifty men. He made several other vigorous efforts for the relief of the besieged, but they were all rendered abortive by the foresight and vigilance of the prince of Parma, who repelled his attacks; and, in spite of the annoyance which he gave him from without, kept up an incessant fire upon the town till a great part of the wall was demolished. The different nations of which the army consisted, were disputing with each other for the honour of beginning the assault, when the besieged, dreading the fatal consequences that might follow, sur-
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rendered the town on nearly the same conditions with those which had been granted to the citizens of Grave. The prince of Parma found it necessary to employ all his authority to prevent the soldiers, whom the capitulation disappointed of their prey, from offering violence to the inhabitants; and he gave a proof of his respect for Schench, by treating his wife and sister in the most honourable manner, and furnishing them with his own coach to carry them to whatever place they should incline to.

The siege
and destruction
of Nuys.

FROM Venlo, Farnese went without delay and invested Nuys, which belongs to the bishopric of Cologne, but was at that time in the possession of the States.

GEBHERT de Trufches, the archbishop and elector of Cologne, having, about three years before the present period, abjured the catholic religion, and married, attempted still to retain his bishopric and electorate; but his canons, supported by the pope and emperor, excommunicated him; and having made war against him, in which they were assisted by the prince of Parma, they obliged him to take refuge in Holland, and elected in his room Ernest, son of the duke of Bavaria. The count de Meurs, one of his partizans, soon after recovered for him, by surprize, the town of Nuys, and obtained from the States a garrison, with which he had been able not only to defend that town against the force of Ernest, but to over-run the country, and do infinite mischief to the catholic inhabitants. Ernest, unable to repress their eruptions, had gone himself in disguise to the prince of Parma to solicit his assistance, and it was in compliance with his request, that Farnese, postponing the prosecution of his designs against the northern provinces, engaged in his present enterprise.

z Meteren. Strada.

prize. He knew that Philip regarded no undertaking as foreign to his interest, in which the security of the catholic religion was concerned; and he dreaded that if the garrison of Nuys was not checked in time, they might gather strength, and persuade some of the neighbouring protestant princes to espouse their cause. Some historians affirm, that he was likewise prompted by the prospect of that glory which he would acquire, should he conquer in a few weeks, as he expected, a town which Charles the Bold duke of Burgundy had in vain attempted to reduce with an army of sixty thousand men in the space of a year.

IN this expectation he was not disappointed. Through a misfortune which befell the garrison in the person of Cloet the governor, who, being dangerously wounded, was disabled from attending to the operations of the defence, their resolution failed; and in less than three weeks after the prince's arrival before the town, they began to treat of a surrender. That he might save time, and deliver the town as entire as possible to the elector, Farnese agreed without any difficulty to an armistice; and he had begun to treat with the deputies of the besieged, concerning the terms of capitulation, when the Italian and Spanish troops, (who had been highly incensed on account of his having prevented them from plundering the inhabitants of Venlo) being transported with a sudden rage, ran forward in contempt of his authority, and assaulted the town on different sides, while the garrison, who trusted to the armistice, were off their guard. Meeting with little resistance, they quickly scaled the walls, spread themselves over the town, and butchered all who fell in their way, without distinction of age, sex, or condition. Nor was their barbarous cruelty satiated with the horrid carnage which they committed. Their fury being turned into madness, they spurned the
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thoughts of plunder, and set fire to the town; and as the wind was high, and most of the houses were built of wood, it was in a few hours consumed to ashes. Two churches only escaped, in which a number of women and children had taken refuge; and it was with difficulty that the marquis del Guaſto prevailed upon the savage foldiers to spare the lives of thoſe trembling, miſerable remains of the inhabitants ^h.

Siege of
Rhineberg.

FROM this diſaſtrous ſcene, Farnefe, now duke of Parma, by his father's death, directed his march towards Rhineberg; another place in the electorate of Cologne, of which, on account of its important ſituation, the States were extremely ſollicitous to retain poſſeſſion.

Operations
of the earl of
Leiceſter.

THE earl of Leiceſter mean while had been employed in drawing together all the forces which could be ſpared from the garrisons of the towns and forts, and ſeemed determined not to ſuffer any more of the campaign to paſs without ſtriking ſome important ſtroke, which might ſatisfy the expectations of the confederates. But as his army, which conſiſted only of ſeven thouſand foot and one thouſand four hundred horſe, was inferior in number to the enemy, he durſt not hazard an engagement; but reſolved to attack ſome place of importance in the poſſeſſion of the Spaniards, in order to induce the duke of Parma to relinquish the ſiege of Rhineberg. He directed his march towards Zutphen, and in order to facilitate his deſign againſt that place, firſt attacked, and made himſelf maſter of the town of Doesburg; after which he ſat down with his whole army before Zutphen, and began the ſiege in form.

If

^h Bentivoglio, part ii. lib iv.

IF he had followed the counsel that was given him, to secure certain passes which led to the town, it must unavoidably have fallen into his hands; as it was neither furnished with provisions, nor with military stores. Of this the duke of Parma had been particularly informed by Baptisto Tassi the governor; and for this reason, although he had made progress in his operations against Rhineberg, he immediately raised the siege of that place, and hastened with all his forces to the relief of Zutphen. As he was acquainted with the extremity to which the besieged were reduced, he sent the Italian cavalry, under the marquis del Guaſto, before the rest of the army, with a temporary supply; and ordered a numerous body of Spanish infantry to advance with the utmost expedition. Through Leicester's neglect to fortify the passes, a part of this supply was introduced into the towns without difficulty, in the night; and on the day following, del Guaſto attempted to introduce the rest. On this occasion a fierce encounter happened between the Italian and English cavalry. At the first onset the Italians were compelled to retire; but they soon returned to the charge. The action then became hot and obstinate, and the issue remained for some time doubtful. Del Guaſto, seconded by several officers of distinguished reputation, made every effort that could have been expected from the most experienced commander. But the English, led on by colonel Norris and Sir Philip Sidney, proved a second time victorious, and drove the Italians before them till they reached the Spanish infantry; when the English, being ignorant whether the whole Spanish army was at hand, thought it dangerous to advance. Of the Italians about one hundred and fifty were killed and wounded, and of the English thirty. But the latter paid dear for their victory, by their irreparable loss of the brave and accomplished Sir Philip

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He lays siege
to Zutphen.

Death of Sir
Philip Sidney

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Leicester
obliged to
raise the
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Sidney; who is celebrated by his cotemporaries, as a person of the most consummate worth; and as he possessed the favour of Elizabeth, must, if it had been the will of heaven to prolong his life, have soon attained to the highest dignities in her power to bestow. Soon after this rencounter, the duke of Parma arrived with his whole army in order of battle; and Leicester, conscious of the inferiority of his forces, drew them off from the siege, and suffered him to enter Zutphen without opposition. Here the duke remained till he had visited the fortifications, and laid in a sufficient quantity of ammunition and provisions; after which he repassed the Rhine, and having put garisons into his new conquests, he set out for Brussels.

Leicester
takes some
forts near
Zutphen.

His troops were no sooner distributed into winter-quarters, than Leicester returned with his army towards Zutphen. He did not however intend to enter so late in the year upon the siege of the town itself, but only to make himself master of three forts on the opposite side of the river, which put it in the power of the Spaniards to make frequent incursions into the territory of Veluwe. In this attempt he succeeded, and thereby deprived the Spaniards for a time of what had been the principal advantage which they derived from the possession of Zutphen. After which, having stationed a part of his troops in these forts, he returned to the Hague, where the States had been appointed to convene.

Leicester's
arbitrary and
imprudent
conduct,

THIS assembly had no great reason to be satisfied with their new governor's management of the war; and they were highly discontented with his civil administration. During the course of those military operations which have been related, he had treated them in many respects rather as a conquered province, than a free state, to whose assistance he had been sent by their friend and ally; and

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and had shewn no less contempt of their fundamental laws, to which he knew they were unalterably attached, than to the conditions of their treaty with Elizabeth. Instead of regulating his conduct by the advice of the States or council, as gratitude and prudence required, he appears to have conceived an early prejudice against all those who had distinguished themselves in the service of their country, while he bestowed his favour on a set of artful and designing men, of suspected fidelity, who were obsequious to his caprice.

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By their counsel, he laid such restrictions upon trade, that if the States had not interposed with vigour, would have proved fatal to it; and obliged many of those Flemish merchants who had lately settled in Holland and Zealand, to remove into foreign parts. By the same advice, he tampered with the coin, and made such alterations in it as enriched his minions or himself, whilst they impoverished the provinces.

INNOVATIONS were introduced without the consent of the States, in the manner of collecting the public money; and after it was collected, instead of putting it, as the constitution required, into the hands of the treasurer chosen by the States, Leicester ordered it to be delivered to a treasurer of his own appointment, who refused to satisfy the States as to the purposes to which it was applied. Taxes were levied from the people, for paying not only all the soldiers in the garrisons, and all the country troops, but sufficient likewise for the payment of between six and seven thousand Germans; yet the soldiers in the garrisons were so ill paid, that the officers found it difficult to prevent a mutiny; and two thousand Germans who had enlisted under the count de Meurs, in hopes of receiving a certain sum on their arrival in the Netherlands, being disappointed, through

the governor's negligence, or the corruption of those in whom he confided, returned to Germany without drawing their swords, at a time when their assistance was absolutely necessary to the success of the campaign.

IN the treaty between the States and Elizabeth it had been agreed, that when any vacancy should happen in the government of a town, fort, or province, the commander in chief should fill it up with one of three persons presented to him by the States. To this agreement Leicester paid no regard, but appointed persons to governments of great importance, not only without their being named by the States, but even when the States remonstrated against his appointing them. Roland York, a Londoner, who had some years before been detected in treasonable practices, of which they gave Leicester timely information, was notwithstanding this intrusted with the charge of the principal fort near Zutphen, which commanded the country of Veluwe; and William Stanley, an English catholic, who had been in the service of Spain, was made governor of Deventer, into which place Leicester, in contradiction to the treaty with Elizabeth, had put a garrison of twelve thousand foot and two hundred horse, consisting mostly of Irish papists.

BESIDES these and other instances of imprudent and arbitrary conduct, he disgusted the Dutch troops by appointing English officers to command them. He compelled the people to furnish him with carriages, and to serve in his army as pioneers; and, in violation of what had ever been esteemed a fundamental privilege of the inhabitants of the Netherlands, he obliged persons, prosecuted by his tools, to leave the provinces in which they resided, and to submit to their trial in

in other provinces, where their prosecutors had greater influence to procure their condemnation ^{b.}

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SUCH a complication of despotic measures in the government of a people jealous of their liberty, appears repugnant, whatever were the governor's motives, to the very lowest degree of prudence, of which we can suppose him to have been possessed. It is not surprising that he was suspected of having formed a plan to suppress the assembly of the States, and to assume an absolute authority; but if his presumption could impose upon him so far as to make him believe, that so wise a princess as Elizabeth would, from her partiality to him, and in open violation of her engagements, support his usurpation, yet his conduct was extremely ill calculated to promote this perfidious design. It disgusted all the better sort of those who had influence in the provinces, and served to diffuse an universal alarm, before he had taken measures proper for securing success in his attempt.

THE States however, sensible of their present dependence upon Elizabeth, resolved to avoid an open rupture with her favourite, and, notwithstanding what had passed, they received him on his arrival at the Hague with every mark of respect. They delivered to him a modest but firm remonstrance, and intreated him with much earnestness to redress their grievances. Leicester could not justify his conduct in any of the particulars that have been mentioned. He attempted, however, to make some apology for it, and assured the deputies, though with little sincerity, that for the future he should be careful to avoid giving them any just ground of offence. He added, that at present he was under a necessity of passing over to England, on account of certain disturbances

The States
remonstrate.

^b Van Meteren, lib. xiii. Grotius, lib. v.

turbances in that kingdom, which required his presence. The States were extremely surpris'd at this intimation, as they expected that he would have proceeded immediately to reform the abuses of which they had complain'd; but they were in some measure reconcil'd to his departure, by his agreeing to a proposal which they made to him, that till his return to the Low Countries, his authority as governor should be lodg'd in the council of state; and he accordingly execut'd a public deed to this effect on the twenty-fourth of November, although it soon afterwards appear'd that he had done it only to avoid the trouble of any further solicitation upon the subject. He execut'd privately on the same day another deed, in which he reserv'd to himself an exclusive authority over all the governors of provinces, towns, and forts, and even deprived the council of state of their wonted authority. This conduct, at once so cowardly and insincere, alienated from him more than ever the affections of the States, and destroyed entirely the confidence which they had repos'd in him. It confirm'd the opinion of those who believ'd that he aspir'd at the sovereignty, and fill'd the minds of persons of all ranks with the most alarming apprehensions.

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Treachery of
Roland York
and William
Stanley.

THE States had, as mention'd above, remonstrated against the trust committed to Roland York and William Stanley. These men gave soon a fatal proof of the justness of the suspicions which had been entertain'd of their fidelity. In a few weeks after Leicester's departure for England, they enter'd into a treacherous correspondence with Baptisto Tassi, governor of Zutphen, and began to prepare their measures for delivering to him the important fortresses which had been intrusted to their care. The council of state received intelligence of their perfidious design; but they had not power to hinder them from putting it

it in execution. In the beginning of February, both Deventer and the fort opposite to Zutphen were given up to the Spaniards. York did not live long to enjoy the wages of his iniquity, and died in misery, neglected and forgotten by those to whom he had sacrificed his honour; but Stanley, having persuaded most of his troops to enter into the service of Spain, and having uniformly professed the catholic religion, (which Philip considered as an atonement for the most odious crimes) was permitted to retain the government of Deventer, together with the same rank in the Spanish, which he had enjoyed in the English army. This man, sprung from a respectable family in England, had been concerned in Babington's conspiracy in favour of the queen of Scots, and was probably betrayed, by the dread of a discovery, into this unworthy conduct, which has involved his name in perpetual infamy.

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THE news of these disasters spread grief and consternation over the confederated provinces. They recalled the memory of the duke of Anjou's attempt on Antwerp, and excited great anxiety and dread, lest the examples of York and Stanley should be imitated by the governors of other forts and towns.

THE States participated of the distress which the people felt on the present occasion. They still however maintained their wonted fortitude, and without regard to Leicester's resentment, resolved to provide, as well as their circumstances would allow, for the preservation of the commonwealth. In an assembly held at the Hague on the sixth of February, after asserting their own supreme authority, they enacted, that during the absence of the earl of Leicester, prince Maurice should exercise the authority of governor, and that all officers in their service should take an oath of obedience

Prudence
and moderation
of the
States.

Book
XX.

1587.

obedience to *him*, and of fidelity to the States. To this resolution, which was immediately published and enforced, two declarations were subjoined: the first, that the States did not thereby mean to abridge the authority which they had conferred on the earl of Leicester, but only to restore to the inferior governors their legal rights and powers; and the second, that they highly disapproved of those general reflections which had been thrown out against the English troops, on account of the late treachery of a few individuals; for there were bad as well as good men in every nation, and nothing could be more illiberal and unjust than such undistinguishing reflections.

They represent their
grievances to
Elizabeth.

BUT while their conduct at home contained this mixture of firmness and moderation, they gave vent to their resentment in letters, which they appointed some of their number to carry to Elizabeth and Leicester; in which, after making mention of the trust and confidence which they had placed in him, they entered into a full detail of their grievances.

LEICESTER was highly offended with these letters, and endeavoured to persuade Elizabeth, that they had been written by a party who were his enemies, while the generality were well affected both to his person and government. There was indeed a numerous faction in the Netherlands under the direction of the clergy, whom Leicester had attached to him by a punctilious attendance on public worship, and an affectation of zeal for the reformed religion. These men not only concurred with his partizans in England, in attempting to discredit the representation of his conduct, which the States transmitted to Elizabeth, but studied to controul the authority of the States at home, and endeavoured to inspire the queen with the most groundless prejudices against prince Maurice and other popular leaders, through whose
influence

influence, they said, the States had conceived a disgust against the English alliance, and were now no less alienated from the queen than from the earl of Leicester. Elizabeth did not hearken implicitly either to the States or their accusers, but sent over to Holland lord Buckhurst, a nobleman esteemed for his prudence and moderation, to enquire into the ground of that contradictory information which she had received, but chiefly with an intention to extinguish, as soon as possible, the spirit of animosity and division to which the governor's imprudence had given rise. Buckhurst soon discovered the falsehood of those insinuations which Leicester's partizans had propagated with regard to the designs of prince Maurice and the disaffection of the States; and he found no reason to call in question any part of that remonstrance which had been sent to Elizabeth. He wisely declined entering into any discussion of the points of difference between the opposite parties, approved in general of the conduct of the States since Leicester's departure, exhorted them to bury in oblivion what had passed, and reminded them of the mischievous consequences with which the want of harmony must be attended in the present critical situation of their affairs.

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1587.

Lord Buck-
hurst sent to
the Nether-
lands.

THESE exhortations seemed to produce, in some measure, the desired effect; the States appeared satisfied that Leicester should still retain the office of governor, and lord Buckhurst carried back to Elizabeth such a report of their disposition, as was calculated to preserve that amity which had hitherto subsisted between her and them; but he scrupled not to condemn the conduct of her favourite, and accused him of being the cause of all the disturbances which had happened. If any other of Elizabeth's courtiers had been guilty of the same indiscretions with the earl of Leicester, it is not to be doubted that he would have felt the weight of her resentment. He had far exceeded

Elizabeth's
partiality for
Leicester.

the

the powers which she had given him. By his misconduct he had strengthened the hands of her mortal enemy, the king of Spain. And by his misconduct and arrogance together, he had almost involved her in dissensions with an ally whom she had undertaken to defend, and with whom it was of the highest consequence to her interest that she should maintain a perfect understanding. Yet such was her partiality for this unworthy favourite, and so great the influence which he possessed, that he found means to turn her indignation from himself against his accuser. Lord Buckhurst incurred her displeasure, and was even put under arrest, as if *he*, and not Leicester, had been guilty^k.

Famine and
pestilence in
the southern
provinces.

NOTHING could be more agreeable to the duke of Parma than these distractions in the confederated provinces; but he was prevented from availing himself of them, by the miserable condition to which the provinces under his command were reduced by famine and pestilence. The country, as well as the towns, in the southern provinces, had of late suffered a prodigious diminution of inhabitants. Great numbers had forsaken their habitations, partly on account of their religion, and partly of the ravages which had been committed by the troops; and only a few of those who remained, had either seed to sow, or horses and cattle to cultivate their grounds. There had been almost no crop raised in the preceding year within the provinces, and the crops in the neighbouring countries had been worse than usual for several years. From Holland and Zealand the Flemings might have been abundantly supplied, but the confederated States, besides prohibiting all

^k Meteren, lib. xiv. Bentivoglio, p. ii. lib. iv. Reidanus, lib. vi. Camden, ann. 1587.

all communication with the southern provinces, had placed guard-ships upon the coasts, and in the mouths of the rivers, to prevent them from receiving supplies from foreign parts, in the hopes of weakening the Spanish army, or of compelling the frontier towns to return into the confederacy. This cruel policy was not attended with either of these effects. The duke of Parma brought provisions for his army from France, Germany, and England, at an immense expence, and he gave particular attention to the supplying of those towns which lay nearest to the United Provinces.

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1587.

THOSE dreadful calamities which are the ordinary concomitants of famine, were felt chiefly in the interior parts, where great multitudes died of want, and of those pestilential diseases which want and unwholesome nourishment produced. In Antwerp, Brussels, and other places, many persons of the better ranks in life, after selling their furniture and other effects to purchase food, were reduced to beg openly in the streets. In Brabant and Flanders several villages were entirely deserted: and the cotemporary historians add, that from the solitude and desolation of some parts of the country, wolves and other wild beasts were so much multiplied, that besides many persons who perished in other places, upwards of a hundred were devoured by those furious animals, within two miles of Ghent, in a country formerly one of the best cultivated and most populous in the Netherlands.

SUCH was the state of the southern provinces, which are by nature the richest, though governed by the duke of Parma with superior abilities. On the other hand, the maritime provinces were torn by factions, and governed by one who possessed neither moderation, prudence, nor capacity; yet the

Prosperity
of the United
Provinces

the inhabitants were not only entirely free from those calamities with which their neighbours were oppressed, but were richly furnished with all the necessaries of life, and daily increased in numbers. Every house was occupied, new streets and new towns were built, and individuals grew richer every day, notwithstanding the perpetual burden of an expensive war. For these advantages the Dutch were indebted chiefly to their commerce, which had long been considerable, but was of late considerably augmented by the multitude of manufacturers and merchants who flocked into Holland and Zealand, when Brabant and Flanders were broken off from the confederacy. The calamities of the latter provinces contributed still more to increase the migration of people into the former, till they became the seat of the greatest part of that wealth and industry, which for ages past had distinguished the Netherlands above the rest of Europe¹.

IN this condition of the United Provinces, it may appear surprising, that during the space of eight months no attempt was made by the confederates to recover any of the towns which had been taken from them; but division here, and the want of capacity and vigour in the person intrusted with the reins of government, were attended with some of the same effects as were produced by the famine and pestilence in the other provinces. Neither prince Maurice nor the States had power at this time to enforce obedience to their commands, except in the provinces of Holland and Zealand. In the rest, the partizans of Leicester disputed, and counteracted their authority; and thus, the duke of Parma, notwithstanding those unspeakable calamities in which the provinces under his government were involved, was sooner ready than

¹ Van Meteren, lib. iv. p. 434. Thuanus, lib. lxxxviii. p. 9.

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than the confederates to resume the operations of the war.

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OSTEND and Sluys were the only towns of importance in Flanders which had not submitted to his arms. He now resolved to attack the latter of these places; and, in order to conceal his design, he sent Hautepeine and the marquis del Guaſto, with a body of troops, towards the Veluwe, as if he had intended to make his principal attack in that quarter. This artifice had the effect which he deſired. Prince Maurice and count Hohenloe were immediately ſent to the Veluwe with the army of the States; and in the mean time the duke turned ſuddenly towards Sluys. This place, which lies at a little diſtance from the coaſt, communicates with the ſea by a ſpacious canal, capable of receiving the largeſt ſhips. By this canal, which ſeparates Sluys from the iſle of Cadſand, the town is rendered inacceſſible by land on the weſt and north; and all the ground on the eaſt is ſo broken and interſected, by an infinite number of ſmaller canals derived from the larger, that it is impracticable to approach the place except by a neck of land on the ſouth, leading towards Damme and Bruges. Sluys lies at the diſtance of nearly five miles from Oſtend on the ſouth, and from Flushing on the north; from the former of which it might receive aſſiſtance by land, and from the latter by ſea. It was therefore the duke of Parma's firſt object to intercept the communication of the beſieged with theſe two places, and for this purpoſe he began with attacking the fort of Blackenberg, which ſtands half way between Sluys and Oſtend. As the gariſon were utterly unprepared for reſiſtance againſt ſo vigorous an attack, he ſoon compelled them to ſurrender; immediately after which, he proceeded with a part of his forces to the iſle of Cadſand. At that place, after erecting a fort on the banks of the great canal,

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The ſiege of
Sluys.

Beginning of
June.

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canal, nearer the sea than Sluys, he had recourse to the same expedient which he had employed so successfully at Antwerp, and blocked up the canal by a bridge of ships strongly bound together, and well furnished with troops and artillery.

HAVING thus cut off the only channels of communication by which the friends of the besieged could relieve them, he began to make his approaches to the place itself on that side which looks towards Bruges, on which alone it was accessible. Even there the ground was so wet, as to increase exceedingly the labour of working the trenches; and the besieged had, in order to keep the enemy at a distance, raised a strong redoubt beyond the ditch. The garrison consisted of about one thousand six hundred men, partly English and partly Dutch, commanded by colonel Groenvelt, one of the bravest officers in the service of the States. In the beginning of the siege they made several vigorous sallies, in which they gave the most shining proofs of intrepidity. But finding that, although in these sallies they did great execution among the enemy, their own numbers suffered considerable diminution, Groenvelt resolved to restrain them for the future from advancing beyond the redoubt. This redoubt they defended for some time with great bravery, and frequently repulsed the assailants; but they were obliged at last to yield to superior numbers, and to retire within the town.

IN carrying forward the trenches, Farnese encountered difficulties from the softness of the ground, and the incessant fire of the besieged, that were almost insurmountable. Many of his troops were killed, and the marquis of Renti, La Motte, and several others of his principal officers were dangerously wounded.

IN

IN the mean time prince Maurice and count Hohenloe had entered Brabant, and after destroying a great number of little towns and villages, had directed their march towards Bois-le-Duc, hoping that, in order to save that place, the duke of Parma would quit the siege of Sluys. But before they had taken the fort of Engelem, which lay in their way to Bois-le-duc, they were informed that the earl of Leicester, who had long been impatiently expected, had at last arrived at Flushing with a reinforcement of troops. Maurice set out instantly, with some cohorts, to meet him, leaving Hohenloe with the rest of the forces to prosecute the enterprize against Engelem and Bois-le-duc. When Maurice had joined Leicester, the confederate army was nearly equal to that of the besiegers. Leicester set sail from Flushing on the 29th of June, and in a few hours reached the canal of Sluys. But after examining the bridge, redoubts, and forts, with which Farnese had blocked up the passage, he judged it impracticable in that way to reach the town. Between the desire of accomplishing his design, and the difficulty which he must encounter in carrying it into execution, he balanced for some days, and at length he steered his course for Ostend, with the resolution to lead his troops from thence by land to the relief of the besieged. In the prosecution of this latter design, he shewed no greater spirit than in that of the former. To open his way from Ostend to Sluys, it was necessary he should make himself master of the fort of Blackemberg. He accordingly laid siege to that fort, and had begun to batter it with his cannon; but he was no sooner informed that the duke of Parma was upon his march to give him battle, than he drew off his troops from Blackemberg, retired hastily in the night to Ostend, and soon afterwards returned to Zealand.

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1587.

Return of
Leicester
from Eng-
land.

His feeble
attempts to
raise the siege
of Sluys.

THE

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Generous
resolution of
the besieged.

They capi-
tulate.

THE duke of Parma resumed with fresh ardour the operations of the siege, and having at last, though with incredible labour, pushed his trenches near enough for erecting a battery, he soon laid a great part of the wall in ruins. He would then have attempted an assault, had he not perceived that the besieged had raised within the wall a half moon, which they had fortified in the strongest manner. Laying aside therefore all thoughts of taking the town by storm, he resolved to employ the slower method of filling up the ditch, and working mines; and in these operations, against which the besieged made the most vigorous opposition, near three weeks were spent after the wall had been demolished. The besieged had received certain intelligence that Leicester had given up all hopes of being able to relieve them, and they had now no more gunpowder left than was sufficient to serve them for ten or twelve hours longer. Six days before this time Groenvelt, and the other surviving officers, having assembled together, were of opinion, that as they had no prospect of relief, it would not be dishonourable to surrender the place upon certain conditions; but they resolved that, in case these conditions were rejected, they would set fire to the town, and endeavour to force their way sword in hand through the enemy's entrenchments. This resolution, with the articles of the surrender, which they committed to writing, and confirmed with an oath, was sent to the earl of Leicester, to serve for a vindication of their conduct. But their messenger was discovered in swimming across the canal, and the paper seized and carried to the duke of Parma, whose prudence and respect for valour, though in an enemy from whom he had suffered greatly, made him resolve to grant them those terms on which he had thus accidentally discovered they were so much determined to insist. Accordingly when, their gunpowder being almost

most spent, they offered to deliver the town, upon condition that they should march out with the honours of war, he instantly complied with their request. Their number had been reduced from sixteen or seventeen hundred, to seven hundred men. The loss of the besiegers was likewise very great. The cotemporary historians do not mention the particular number of the killed and wounded; but they concur in saying that Sluys cost the duke of Parma more than Nuys, Grave, and Venloe together^m.

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1587.
August 4.

It afforded him great satisfaction under this calamity, that during the siege of Sluys he had, without any bloodshed, acquired the town of Guelders, which was betrayed to him by a Scots colonel of the name of Paton. To this man, Leicester had committed the government of Guelders; but having taken offence at some part of his conduct, he had openly threatened to put another, of the name of Stuart, in his room. In order to avoid this affront, Paton entered into a correspondence with Hautpeine, whose troops were at that time in the neighbourhood of Guelders, and with his assistance he soon afterwards executed his perfidious design.

Guelders
betrayed to
the Spaniards.

To compensate to the States for so many important places, as they had lost since their alliance with England, their forces had gained no advantage but the reduction of Axel, which prince Maurice took by a stratagem; and the fort of Engelem, which was compelled to surrender by count Hohenloe; who at the same time beat the Spanish troops under Hautpeine, in a rencounter, in which the latter lost his life.

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I i

AFTER

^m Strada mentions the numbers killed on both sides; but his whole relation of this siege is so exceedingly romantic, that no credit can be given to it.

Meteren, lib. xiv. p. 439. Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. iv.

BOOK
XX.

1583.

AFTER Leicester's unsuccessful attempt to raise the siege of Sluys, he transported his troops to Brabant, and made another equally inglorious attempt to reduce the town and district of Hoogstraten. This was the last military enterprise which he undertook in the Netherlands, immediately after which he set out for Dort, whither the States had sent some of their number to wait his arrival.

Intrigues of
Leicester.

THIS assembly was now more disgusted than ever with his conduct. They long had reason to suspect, and they had lately received certain intelligence, that he had formed a design to deprive them of their authority. A letter of his, writ from England to one of his secretaries, had been intercepted, in which, after mentioning his intended return to the Low Countries, he expressed, in strong terms, his discontent with the limited power which he had hitherto enjoyed as governor; sent instructions to be communicated to those who were privy to his designs; and insinuated, that if he could not obtain a more extensive authority, it was the queen's resolution, and his own, to abandon the provinces altogether, and to leave them to their fate.

The States
alarmed.

THE States, alarmed with this intelligence, resolved to stand upon their guard against his machinations. Being still however unwilling, from their dread of Elizabeth's displeasure, to come to an open rupture with him, they took no notice of this letter, but exhorted him to reject such malignant counsels as might be offered by ill designing men, who, in order to promote their own selfish views, wished to sow the seeds of animosity and dissention. From this exhortation, Leicester easily perceived that the States had come to the knowledge of his designs. With great dissingenuity he accused them of having violated their faith, by abridging that authority which they had

had intreated him to accept ; and he threw the blame of all the misfortunes which had befallen the confederacy, partly on the States, and partly on prince Maurice and count Hohenloe. The States, he said, had neglected to furnish him with the necessary supplies ; and Maurice and Hohenloe had, on different pretences, refused to co-operate with him in his military enterprises. Of a writing which contained these and some other groundless accusations, copies were sent by his partizans into different parts of the provinces. The parties accused published a vindication of their conduct ; and it is impossible, from what is preserved of this altercation, to consider what Leicester advanced, in any other light, but as the mean attempt of a person, equally weak and disingenuous, to blacken the characters of others, in order to conceal the cowardice and imprudence of which he himself was conscious. Such was the judgment formed of it by the impartial world, and by most of the inhabitants of the Netherlands. But there was still a numerous party who espoused Leicester's defence, and promoted the execution of his designs. The clergy were still as much attached to him as ever, and spared no pains to bring the people to a compliance with his will. Having with this view called a synod or assembly, they appointed four of their number to present an address to the States, in which, besides exhorting them to attend to the true interest of the country, and the advancement of religion, they advised them to maintain concord with the queen of England, and the earl of Leicester.

To this address, the States made such a reply as the officiousness of those in whose name it was presented, seems to have deserved. " They had not been inattentive (they said) to those important objects which the synod had recommended to their attention ; and they could not be more solicitous

The officiousness of the clergy.
I i 2 than

HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF

than they had always been, to preserve inviolate those engagements into which they had entered with the queen of England and the earl of Leicester; but in their turn they must exhort the ministers to be on their guard against admitting among them persons, who under the cloak of religion, made it their business to calumniate the civil magistrates. By persons such as these, who affected great zeal for religion, the church had been ruined in the southern provinces; and its ruin in the United Provinces would soon be accomplished, if an end were not speedily put to the practices of such designing men. They concluded with exhorting the ministers to take warning from the fate of their brethren in Brabant and Flanders; and to remember, that the only way in which they ought to interfere in public affairs, was to favour those to whom the administration was committed, with the assistance of their prayers."

Leicester's
designs are
frustrated.

NEITHER this wholesome counsel, nor any other measure which the States employed to enlighten and alarm their countrymen, produced for some time the desired effect. Leicester still continued to carry on his intrigues in different places, and went from town to town, putting in practice every low art by which he might increase the number of his partizans. In Friesland, North Holland, and even in Dort and Leyden, there were many who espoused his cause, and shewed themselves desirous to invest him with authority to controul the assembly of the States, notwithstanding the many striking proofs which he had given both of tyranny and folly. In Leyden a plot was laid for putting him in possession of that important city; but the conspirators were detected, condemned, and executed. And by the vigilance of the States, seconded by prince Maurice and William de Nassau, governor of Friesland, his designs in other places were rendered equally ineffectual.

ineffectual. Having come at last to perceive that he was not equal to the attempt upon which he had entered, he grew tired of his situation, and in the month of December passed over to England, where, not long after his arrival, Elizabeth, either from a conviction of his incapacity, or from the desire of keeping him for the future near her person, required him to resign his government of the provinces; which he accordingly did, on the 27th of December one thousand five hundred and eighty-sevenⁿ.

BOOK
XX.

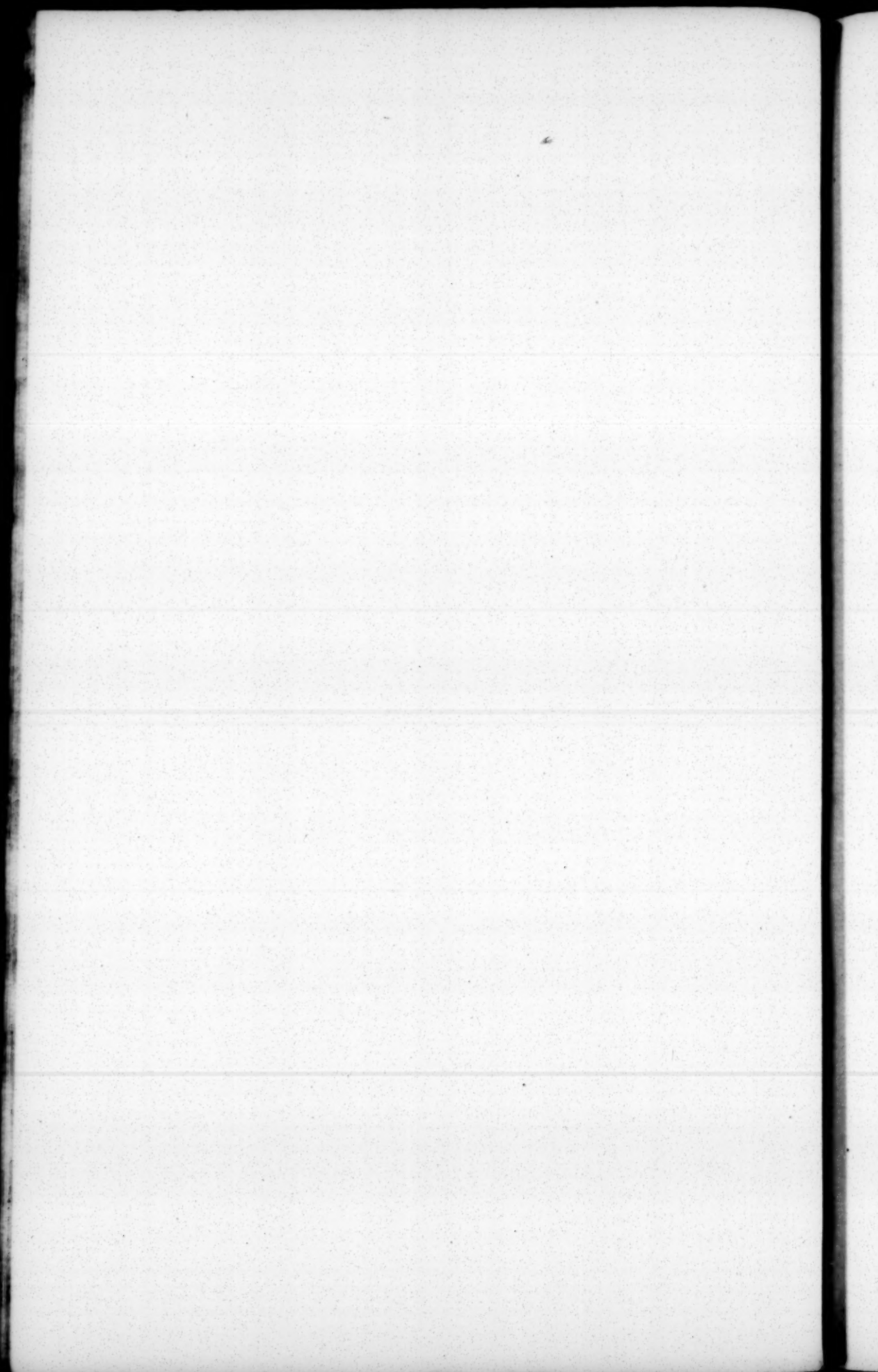
1587.

He resigns
the govern-
ment.

THE flame however which he had kindled was not so soon extinguished. In some towns, the garrisons, instigated by him or his emissaries, openly despised the authority of the states. Against the garrison of Medemblinc, they were obliged to employ force; and in order to engage other garrisons to yield obedience to their commands, they had recourse to the interposition of Elizabeth, through whose good offices internal tranquillity was at length restored.

■ Meteren, p. 455

THE



THE
H I S T O R Y
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND
KING OF SPAIN.
B O O K XXI.

P A R T I.

ELIZABETH was the more solicitous to heal the divisions in the United Provinces, as she apprehended that she would soon have occasion for all the assistance which her allies could afford her. All Europe had resounded for some time with the noise of the preparations, which Philip was making, with a view to some important enterprise. He had been employed for several months in building ships of an extraordinary size, and in collecting stores for their equipment; while the duke of Parma had made such numerous levies in Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, as shewed that he intended to take the field against the next campaign, with a much more powerful army than any which he had hitherto commanded.

Book
XXI.

1587.
Philip medi-
tates the
conquest
of England.

ALMOST ever since the beginning of Philip's reign, a great proportion of his troops had been occupied, either in war with the Corsairs and Turks, in the reduction of the Morecoes, or in the

His motives.

B o o k
XXI.

1587.

the conquest of Portugal. He had never fully exerted his strength against his revolted subjects in the Netherlands. Nor had he found leisure to take vengeance upon Elizabeth, for the support which she had given them, and the insults which he had received from her in America, where several of his colonies had been plundered by her fleet^a. To these objects he now thought that his honour as well as his interest required that he should apply his principal attention. As he did not doubt that, with a much smaller force than he intended to employ, he should be able to compel the people in the Netherlands to return to their allegiance, he had begun his preparations, chiefly with an intention to invade England, and he aspired to the entire subjection of that kingdom. But he hesitated for some time as to the manner in which he should proceed; and held frequent meetings of his council to assist him in deciding, whether it was most expedient to begin with the invasion of England, or with the conquest of the United Provinces. Idiaquez, one of his principal officers of state, advised him to abandon altogether the former of these designs.

Speech of
Idiaquez.

“ THE situation of England (said that prudent statesman), which is surrounded on every side with a tempestuous ocean, and has few harbours upon its coasts; the numerous forces which defend it; the genius of the people, and the nature of their government, concur in making me believe that it will be found almost impossible to succeed in an attempt to conquer it.

“ THE English navy is alone equal to that of any other nation; and when joined to the ships belonging to the revolted provinces, must prove
an

^a By Sir Francis Drake, anno 1585.

an overmatch for any fleet that can be sent from Spain. And even allowing that the king's forces should effectuate a descent, yet what ground is there to hope that they will be able either to subdue so great a nation, or to maintain, for any considerable time, such conquests as may be made? In order to accomplish the most ordinary conquests, some favourable disposition in the people towards the conquerors is necessary; and in order to preserve them, there is need for a continual supply of troops. From no part of the English nation, has the king any reason to hope for assistance in the intended enterprise. In the beginning of his reign, he had experience of the strong abhorrence which these islanders entertain of a foreign yoke. And he knows how difficult it must be to keep up a numerous army in England, besides all the other armies which are necessary for the defence of his hereditary, and his lately acquired dominions. If England should prove equally pernicious to Spain, as Flanders has done, would there not be reason to dread the consequences? Even the consequences of success may prove fatal; how much more those which may arise from a disappointment, by which Elizabeth, being delivered from her apprehensions of danger at home, would be at greater leisure than ever to support the provinces in their rebellion; and by joining her maritime force with theirs, do infinite mischief to the Spanish dominions, both in Europe and America. In my opinion therefore, it will be better to suspend the design of invading England, and to employ both the fleet and army in the reduction of the Netherlands. The rebels will not long resist so great a force; and when they are subdued, the king, having fewer enemies to contend with, will be much more able than at present to chastise the queen of England."

THE

BOOK
XXI.

1587.
Duke of
Parma's
opinion.

THE duke of Parma, whom Philip consulted on this occasion, was of the same opinion as Idiaquez; and added, That before the king could enter upon the English expedition with a probability of success, it was necessary to acquire possession of some of the most considerable sea-ports in Zealand, for the accommodation of his fleet.

Rejected by
Philip.

PHILIP was not naturally either bold or rash: yet he refused to listen to these prudent counsels. Blinded by the splendid success of his arms in the conquest of Portugal, he thought it impossible that Elizabeth could withstand the powerful armament which he intended to employ against her. And if England were subdued, the reduction of his revolted subjects would quickly follow, as they would then be deprived of the only foreign aid, by which they had been hitherto enabled to persist in their rebellion. Nor would the conquest of the former, he thought, be either so tedious or so difficult as that of the latter; because England was every where an open country, and the English, trusting to their insular situation, had neglected to provide any fortified towns to retard the progress of an enemy. A single battle by sea, and another by land, would decide the contest; and as the fleet which he was preparing was greatly superior to any which Elizabeth could equip, so he could not suppose that her land-forces, undisciplined, and unaccustomed to war, would be able to resist his veteran troops, which had been long enured to victory, and were commanded by the greatest general and the bravest officers in the world.

State of Eu-
rope.

HE was not ignorant how much reason the other European powers had to be jealous of his design; but he considered, that happily they were at present either not inclined, or not in a capacity to

to prevent him from carrying it into execution. B o o k
XXI.
1587.
The emperor of Germany was his friend and ally. The attention of the northern potentates was wholly engrossed with the internal administration of their dominions. And the French monarch, who was more deeply interested than any other in opposing him, could with difficulty support himself upon the throne against his rebellious subjects.

BUT there was nothing which contributed more to confirm him in his purpose, than the approbation which it received from the pope ^b; who, although it has been asserted that no person entertained a higher admiration of the character of Elizabeth, considered her as the most formidable enemy that the church had ever seen upon a throne. She had not indeed, on any occasion, treated her catholic subjects with that inhuman cruelty, of which Philip had set her an example in his treatment of the protestants; but she had shewn herself intent on extirpating the catholic religion from every country in Europe, to which her power and influence could reach. For almost thirty years she had been the chief support of the protestants in Germany, the Netherlands, and France. She had entirely abolished the popish faith in Scotland, as well as in her own dominions; and not satisfied with depriving the unfortunate Mary of her liberty, she had lately after the farce of a solemn trial, ordered that princess to be condemned as a traitor, and to suffer death. This action, for which Elizabeth was severely censured by protestants as well as papists, excited in the violent mind of the pontiff, the highest degree of rage and indignation. With these passions his interest concurred; and the hope of seeing England, which had formerly

^b Sixtus V.

formerly been the most precious jewel of the triple crown, brought back to its ancient obedience to the Holy See. He approved highly therefore of Philip's intended enterprize, exhorted him to persevere in his design, and gave him assurances that he would befriend him in the execution of it to the utmost of his power. Next to an insatiable thirst after dominion, it had ever been Philip's principal ambition to be considered as the guardian of the church; and his vanity was not a little flattered at this time with having the sovereign pontiff for his associate^c.

Artifice of
Philip to de-
ceive Eliza-
beth.

He proceeded therefore with much alacrity in completing his preparations. But although he resolved to spare no expence or pains to secure success; yet, that he might find Elizabeth unprepared, he concealed with care the purpose for which his armament was intended. A part of his fleet, he said, was to co-operate with his land-forces in the reduction of Holland, and the rest to be employed in the defence of his dominions in America.

ELIZABETH had too much penetration to be so easily deceived by the artifices of a prince, with whose duplicity she was so thoroughly acquainted; and in the spring of the year 1587, she sent Sir Francis Drake with a fleet to the coast of Spain to interrupt his preparations. By this gallant seaman, the Spanish Ships of war which had been sent to oppose him were dispersed, and near a hundred vessels filled with naval stores and provisions, besides two large galleons, were destroyed in the harbour of Cadiz. Drake then set sail for the Azores, where he took a rich carrac in her way from the East Indies, and afterwards returned to England loaden with spoils, having by this bold and fortunate adventure rendered it impossible for

^c Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. iv. See a very different account in Gregorio Leti's Life of Sixtus, lib. vii.

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for Philip to execute his enterprize against England till the following year.

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NOTWITHSTANDING these hostilities, Philip still affected to desire that all the grounds of difference between him and Elizabeth might be removed, and gave orders to the duke of Parma to propose a negociation for peace. It is not probable that the queen was deceived by this, any more than by his former artifice. She resolved however to appear to be caught in the snare: she pretended to believe his declaration with regard to the destination of his fleet, and to listen to his proposal of negotiating an agreement. She readily accepted of the mediation of the king of Denmark; and that her conduct might have the greater appearance of sincerity, she urged the States to send ambassadors to Bourbourg, the place appointed for the conferences, and ordered her envoy to represent to them the expediency of putting a period to the war.

1587.
Fruitless negociation for peace.

THE States were much alarmed with her proposal, and suspected that, in order to avert the storm which threatened her, she had resolved to sacrifice the confederacy, and to deliver up to Philip the Dutch towns in her possession. She found it necessary to remove their apprehensions on this head, by declaring, that as she had not the remotest thoughts of forsaking them, so she would never consent to any terms of peace inconsistent with their security.

SHE could not however persuade them to send ambassadors to the congress. "They were deeply sensible, they informed her, of the weight of those considerations which her ambassador had urged to induce them to think of peace. They lamented that spirit of discord which had seized on some towns of the confederacy, and they heard, with great anxiety, of those mighty fleets and
armies

armies which the king of Spain was preparing for their destruction. But their situation, though bad in some respects, was far from being desperate; they were still in possession of more than sixty towns and forts, each of which could make a vigorous resistance against the enemy. In the two years during which the earl of Leicester had governed them, eight millions of guilders had been raised for the public service, and under a prudent administration they would be able not only to continue to afford the same expence, but even to augment it. But although their situation were in reality as ill as some had represented, it could not serve any good purpose to treat of peace with the king of Spain, who was unalterably determined never to grant them peace on such conditions as either their interest or their consciences would permit them to accept. And from past experience they were persuaded, that their sending ambassadors to the congress would be attended with the most pernicious consequences. It would create in many persons such despair with regard to the stability of the present government, as would determine some to change their religion, and others to leave the Netherlands. It would raise the spirits of the catholics, and induce both them and the protestants to withhold their share of the public expences; the former, from the view of forwarding the peace, and the latter, from that of retiring into foreign parts. Thus, both the fleet and the army being ill paid, would become refractory, the commanders of towns and ships would provide for their future security, by entering into secret practices with the enemy; and in the midst of that sedition, confusion, and treachery that would ensue, it would not be in the power of the States, or of the queen, to prevent the people from accepting whatever terms of peace the king of Spain should think fit to impose.

IN these reasons Elizabeth found it necessary to acquiesce; but she persisted in the resolution which she had formed with regard to her own conduct, and ordered her ambassadors to repair to Bourbourg. In the conferences held there, various terms of accommodation were proposed, with no sincerity on the part of Spain, and with little hope of success on the part of England. The Spanish ministers still continued to assure those of England that no invasion of that kingdom was intended; and, considering how long this congress subsisted (for it was not dissolved till the arrival of the Spanish fleet in the channel), it should seem that their asseverations were not wholly disregarded by Elizabeth^d.

THIS artifice however did not prevent her from putting her kingdom into a posture of defence. Elizabeth's Preparations
An army was raised amounting to eighty thousand men, twenty thousand of whom were stationed on the south coast of the island, twenty-two thousand foot and a thousand horse were posted at Tilbury, in Essex, under the earl of Leicester, and the remainder, commanded by lord Hunsdown, were kept near the queen's person, in readiness to march against the enemy wheresoever they should attempt to land. Elizabeth did not trust implicitly at this juncture either to her own judgment, or that of her counsellors of state; lord Gray of Wilton, sir Francis Knolles, Sir John Norris, sir Richard Bingham, and sir Roger Williams, officers of distinguished reputation, were appointed to consider of the measures proper to be pursued; and by their advice, all the sea-ports which lay most conveniently for a descent were fortified; the militia was raised, their arms and manner of fighting ascertained, and a resolution formed that if, notwithstanding the precautions taken, it should be found impossible to prevent the enemy from landing, all the country round should

^d Meteren, lib. xiv. p. 459. Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. iv.

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should be laid waste, and a general engagement avoided till the several armies were combined.

WHILE these prudent measures were pursued at land, Elizabeth exerted herself strenuously in the equipment of her fleet. When she began her preparations, it did not amount to more than thirty ships, and none of these were nearly equal in size to those of the enemy. But this disadvantage was in some measure compensated by the skill and dexterity of the English sailors; and the number of her ships was soon augmented through the alacrity and zeal which her subjects displayed in her defence. By her wise administration she had acquired their esteem and confidence. The animosity against her person and government, which the differences in religion had excited in the minds of some, was at present swallowed up in that universal abhorrence which the catholics as well as the protestants entertained of the tyranny of Spain. Great pains were taken to keep alive and heighten that abhorrence. Accounts were spread of the horrid barbarities which the Spaniards had perpetrated in the Netherlands and America: descriptions were drawn, in the blackest colours, of the inhuman cruelties of the inquisition, and pictures were dispersed of the various instruments of torture employed by the inquisitors, of which, it was said, there was abundant store on board the Spanish fleet. These, and such other considerations, made a strong impression not upon Elizabeth's protestant subjects only, but likewise upon the catholics^c; who, although the pope had published a bull of excommunication against her, yet resolved not to yield to the protestants either in loyalty to their sovereign, or in zeal for the independency of the state. The whole kingdom was of one mind and spirit: some catholics

^c Meteren, lib. xv.

tholics entered into the army as volunteers, and others joined with the protestants in equipping armed vessels. Every maritime town fitted out one or more. The citizens of London furnished thirty, although only fifteen were required of them; and between forty and fifty were equipped by the nobility and gentry throughout the kingdom. But all these ships were of small size, in comparison of those which composed the Spanish fleet; and there was still much ground for the most anxious apprehensions with regard to the final issue of the war.

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No person felt greater anxiety on this occasion than Elizabeth; the principal object of whose prudent politics for thirty years, had been to avoid the critical situation to which she was now reduced. She did not, however, suffer any symptoms of uneasiness to appear, but wore at all times a placid and animated countenance, and in her whole behaviour displayed an undaunted spirit, which commanded admiration and applause.

THE States of Holland, in the mean time, were not inattentive to the approaching danger, nor did they think themselves less interested to provide against it, than if Philip had intended to begin his operations with an attack upon the Netherlands. From their fears of an immediate attack, they were delivered by intelligence of the enormous size of the Spanish ships, to which the coasts of Holland and Zealand were inaccessible. They turned their principal attention therefore to the assistance of their ally: and kept their fleet, consisting of more than eighty ships, ready for action. At Elizabeth's desire, they sent thirty of that number to cruize between Calais and Dover; and, afterwards, when the duke of Parma's design of transporting his army to England was certainly known, they ordered Justin de Nassau, admiral of Zealand, to join lord Seymour, one of the

Preparati-
on: and con-
duct of the
Dutch.

English admirals, with five and thirty ships, to block up those sea-ports in Flanders where the duke intended to embark ^c.

THE principal English fleet was stationed at Plymouth, and the chief command of it was given to Charles lord Howard of Effingham, who had under him as vice-admirals, Sir Francis Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, three of the most expert and bravest seamen in the world.

The Spanish
Armada.

IN the beginning of May 1588, Philip's preparations, which had so long kept all Europe in amazement and suspense, were brought to a conclusion. That Armada, to which the Spaniards, in the confidence of success, gave the name of Invincible, consisted of one hundred and fifty ships, most of which were greatly superior in strength and size to any that had been seen before. It had on board near twenty thousand soldiers, and eight thousand sailors, besides two thousand volunteers of the most distinguished families in Spain. It carried two thousand six hundred and fifty great guns, was victualled for half a year, and contained such a quantity of military stores, as only the Spanish monarch, enriched by the treasures of the Indies and America, could supply.

Duke of
Parma's pre-
parations.

PHILIP'S preparations in the Netherlands were not less advanced than those in Spain. Besides a flourishing army of thirty thousand foot and four thousand horse, which the duke of Parma had assembled in the neighbourhood of Nieuport and Dunkirk; that active general had, with incredible labour, provided a great number of flat-bottomed vessels, fit for transporting both horse and foot, and had brought sailors to navigate them from the towns in the Baltic. Most of these vessels had been built at Antwerp, and as he durst not venture to bring

bring them from thence by sea to Nieuport, left they should have been intercepted by the Dutch, he was obliged to send them along the Scheld to Ghent, from Ghent to Bruges, by the canal which joins these towns, and from Bruges to Nieuport, by a new canal which he dug on the present occasion. This laborious undertaking, in which several thousand workmen had been employed, was already finished, and the duke now waited for the arrival of the Spanish fleet; hoping, that as soon as it should approach, the Dutch and English ships that cruised upon the coast, would retire into their harbours.

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THE Armada would have left Lisbon in the beginning of May, but the marquis de Santa Croce, who had been appointed admiral, was, at the very time fixed for its departure, seized with a violent fever, of which he died in a few days; and, by a singular fatality, the duke de Paliano, the vice-admiral, died likewise at the same time. Santa Croce being reckoned the first naval officer in Spain, Philip had much reason to lament his death, and it should seem that he found it extremely difficult to fill his place, since he named for his successor the duke de Medina-Sidonia, a nobleman of considerable reputation, but entirely unacquainted with maritime affairs. This defect in the commander in chief, Philip supplied in some measure, by giving him Martinez de Recaldo, a seaman of great experience, for his vice-admiral.

Death of the
Spanish ad-
miral.

IN these arrangements so much time was lost, that the fleet could not leave Lisbon till the 29th of May. It had not advanced far in its voyage to Corunna, at which place it was to receive some troops and stores, when it was overtaken by a violent storm and dispersed. All the ships however reached Corunna, though considerably damaged,

The Arma-
da sets sail
from Lisbon.

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except four^f. They were repaired with the utmost diligence, the king sending messengers every day to hasten their departure; yet several weeks passed before they could be put in a condition to resume the voyage.

IN the mean time a report was brought to England, that the Armada had suffered so much by the storm, as to be unfit for proceeding in the intended enterprize; and so well attested did this intelligence appear to queen Elizabeth, that, at her desire, secretary Walsingham wrote to the English admiral, requiring him to lay up four of his largest ships, and to discharge the seamen. Lord Howard was happily less credulous on this occasion than either Elizabeth or Walsingham, and desired that he might be allowed to retain these ships in the service, even though it should be at his own expence, till more certain information were received. In order to procure it, he set sail with a brisk north wind for Corunna, intending, in case he should find the Armada so much disabled as had been reported, to attempt to complete its destruction. On the coast of Spain he received intelligence of the truth: at the same time the wind having changed from north to south, he began to dread that the Spaniards might have sailed for England, and therefore he returned without delay to his former station at Plymouth.

Arrival of
the Armada
in the chan-
nel.

July 30th.

SOON after his arrival, he was informed that the Armada was in sight. He immediately weighed anchor, and sailed out of the harbour, still uncertain of the course which the enemy intended to pursue. On the next day he perceived them steering directly towards him, drawn up in the form of

^f In three of these, the galley-slaves, consisting of English, French, and Turks, taking advantage of the confusion occasioned by the storm, overpowered the Spaniards, and carried the ships into a harbour on the coast of Bayonne. Meteren, p. 476.

of a crescent, which extended seven miles from one extremity to another. It was for some time believed that Plymouth was the place of their destination; and it was the opinion of many persons in that age, that their enterprize would have been more successful than it proved, had they landed there, and not proceeded up the channel. By doing this, it was supposed, they would have drawn Elizabeth's whole force to the south-west coast of the island, and have rendered it easier for the duke of Parma to transport his troops. But in this expectation it is probable they would have been extremely disappointed, as the Dutch fleet alone would have been able to block up the sea-ports in Flanders; the English fleet might have destroyed the Armada had it once entered Plymouth harbour, and Elizabeth's land forces would have been an over-match for all the Spanish troops which the Armada had on board. But if the duke de Medina ever intended to make a descent at Plymouth, he soon changed his design, and adhered closely afterwards to the execution of a plan prescribed to him by the court of Spain. This was to steer quite through the channel till he should reach the coast of Flanders, and after driving away the Dutch and English ships, by which the harbours of Nieuport and Dunkirk were besieged, to escort the duke of Parma's army to England, and to land there the forces that were on board the fleet. In compliance with these instructions, he proceeded in his course, without turning aside to the English, who were drawn up along the coast, and ready to receive him.

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Plan of operations presented by Philip.

LORD Howard, considering that the Spaniards would probably be much superior to him in close fight, by reason of the size of their ships, and the number of their troops, wisely resolved to content himself with harassing them in their voyage, and with watching attentively all the advantages which might

Prudent and gallant conduct of lord Howard.

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might be derived from storms, cross winds, and such like fortuitous accidents. It was not long before he discerned a favourable opportunity of attacking the vice-admiral Recaldo. This he did in person; and on that occasion displayed so much dexterity in working his ship, and in loading and firing his guns, as greatly alarmed the Spaniards for the fate of the vice-admiral. From that time they kept much closer to one another; notwithstanding which, the English on the same day attacked one of the largest galleasses. Other Spanish ships came up in time to her relief, but in their hurry, one of the principal galleons, which had a great part of the treasure on board, ran foul of another ship, and had one of her masts broken. In consequence of this misfortune she fell behind, and was taken by sir Francis Drake; who, on the same day, took another capital ship, which had been accidentally set on fire.

Superiority
of the Eng-
lish sailors.

SEVERAL other rencounters happened, and in all of them the English proved victorious, through the great advantage which they derived from the lightness of their ships, and the dexterity of the sailors. The Spaniards in that age did not sufficiently understand nautical mechanics, to be able to avail themselves of the unusual magnitude of their ships. The English sailed round them, approached or retired with a velocity that filled them with amazement, and did infinitely greater execution with their cannon; for while every shot of theirs proved effectual, their ships suffered very little damage from the enemy, whose guns were planted too high, and generally spent their force in air.

The Armada
opposite to
Calais.

THE Spaniards however still continued to advance till they came opposite to Calais: there the duke de Medina having ordered them to cast anchor, he sent information to the duke of Parma of his

his arrival, and intreated him to hasten the embarkation of his forces. Farnese set out immediately from Bruges, where the messenger found him, for Nieuport, and he began to put his troops on board. But at the same time he informed Medina, that, agreeably to the king's instructions, the vessels which he had prepared, were proper only for transporting the troops, but were utterly unfit for fighting; and for this reason, till the Armada were brought still nearer, and the coast cleared of the Dutch ships which had blocked up the harbours of Nieuport and Dunkirk, he could not stir from his present station, without exposing his army to certain ruin, the consequence of which would probably be the entire loss of the Netherlands.

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IN compliance with this request, the Armada was ordered to advance, and it had arrived within sight of Dunkirk, between the English fleet on the one hand, and the Dutch on the other, when a sudden calm put a stop to all its motions. In this situation the three fleets remained for one whole day. About the middle of the night a breeze sprung up, and lord Howard had recourse to an expedient which had been happily devised on the day before. Having filled eight ships with pitch, sulphur, and other combustible materials, he set fire to them and sent them before the wind against the different divisions of the Spanish fleet.

Is thrown
into confu-
sion by the
English fire-
ships.

August 7th.

WHEN the Spaniards beheld these ships in flames approaching towards them, it brought to their remembrance the havock which had been made by the fireships employed against the duke of Parma's bridge at the siege of Antwerp. The darkness of the night increased the terror with which their imaginations were overwhelmed, and the panic flew from one end of the fleet to the other. Each crew, anxious only for their own preservation, thought
of

of nothing but how to escape from the present danger. Some of them took time to weigh their anchors, but others cut their cables, and suffered their ships to drive with blind precipitation, without considering whether they did not thereby expose themselves to a greater danger than that which they were so solicitous to avoid. In this confusion the ships ran foul of one another: the shock was dreadful, and several of them received so much damage as to be rendered unfit for future use.

Battle between the two fleets.

WHEN day-light returned, lord Howard had the satisfaction to perceive that his stratagem had fully produced the desired effect. The enemy were still in extreme disorder, and their ships widely separated and dispersed. His fleet had lately received a great augmentation by the ships fitted out by the nobility and gentry, and by those under lord Seymour, who had left Justin de Nassau as alone sufficient to guard the coast of Flanders. Being bravely seconded by Sir Francis Drake, and all the other officers, he made haste to improve the advantage which was now presented to him, and attacked the enemy in different quarters at the same time with the utmost impetuosity and ardour.

August 8th.

The engagement began at four in the morning, and lasted till six at night. The Spaniards displayed in every rencounter the most intrepid bravery; but, from the causes already mentioned, they did very little execution against the English, while many of their own ships were greatly damaged, and ten of the largest were either run aground, or sunk, or compelled to surrender.

Losses sustained by the Spaniards.

THE principal galeas, commanded by Moncada, having Mauriquez the inspector-general on board, with three hundred galley-slaves and four hundred foldiers, was driven ashore near Calais. She was quickly followed by some English pinnaces, and these

these were supported by the admiral's long boat, in which he had sent a body of select soldiers to their assistance. Moncada himself, and almost all the Spaniards, were either killed or drowned in attempting to reach the shore. The rowers were set at liberty. About fifty thousand ducats were found on board. Mauriquez escaped, and was the first who carried the news of the disaster of the fleet to Spain.

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ONE of the capital ships having been long battered by an English captain of the name of Cross, was sunk in the time of the engagement. A few only of the crew were saved, who related, that one of the officers on board having proposed to surrender, he was killed by another who was enraged at his proposal; that this other was killed by the brother of the first; and that it was in the midst of this bloody scene, which paints the ferocious character of the Spaniards, that the ship had gone to the bottom §.

THE fate of two other of the Spanish galleons is particularly mentioned by the cotemporary historians. One of them was called the St. Philip, and the other the St. Matthew, which had on board, besides several other nobility, two general officers, Don Francis Toledo, of the family of Orgas, and Don Diego Pimentel, brother to the marquis of Tornarez. After an obstinate engagement, in which the admiral's ship fought along with them, they were obliged to run ashore on the coast of Flanders, where they were taken by the Dutch. Toledo was drowned, and Pimentel, and all the rest who survived, were made prisoners.

THE duke de Medina was much dejected at these misfortunes, and still more when he reflected on the superior skill of the enemy. For
it

The duke de
Medina de-
spairs of suc-
cess.

§ Meteren and Grotius.

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it is well attested, that in all the engagements which had passed since the first appearance of the Armada in the channel, the English had lost only one small ship, and about a hundred men. Animated by their past success with sanguine hopes of final victory, they were now more formidable than ever. Medina dreaded, from a continuance of the combat, the entire destruction of his fleet. He could not without the greatest danger remain any longer in his present situation, and much less could he venture to approach any nearer to the coast of Flanders.

Cause of his
despair.

It now appeared how great an error Philip had committed, in neglecting to secure some commodious harbours in Zealand. He had from the first supposed that the enemy's ships would fly to their respective ports, as soon as his stupendous Armada should appear. But this Armada had been made unfit for the purpose for which it was designed, by means of that enormous expence which he bestowed in order to render it invincible. In constructing it, no attention had been given to the nature of those narrow seas in which it was to be employed; and the consequence of this important error was, that even if the English fleet had been unable to contend with the Spaniards in the deeper parts of the channel, yet they would have prevented them from landing; and the Dutch fleet lying in shallow water, to which the Galleons durst not approach, would still have kept their station, and have rendered it impossible for the Spanish fleet and army to act in concert.

He resolves
to return to
Spain.

THIS the duke of Medina at length perceived, and he did not hesitate in resolving to abandon the further prosecution of his enterprise. The only subject of his deliberation now was, how he might, with

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with the least difficulty and danger, get back to Spain. Had he been ever so much inclined to return through the channel, in which he must have been continually harassed by the enemy, yet the wind, which blew strong from the south, would have prevented him. He therefore resolved to sail northwards, and to make the circuit of the British isles.

THIS resolution was no sooner understood by the English admiral, than having dispatched lord Seymour with a part of the fleet, to join the Dutch in watching the motions of the duke of Parma, he set sail himself with the greater part of it, in pursuit of the Spaniards. He followed close in their rear for three days; without attacking them. This he declined from the apprehension of his not having a sufficient quantity of gun-powder, with which he had been ill supplied by the public offices. Had he not been deterred from renewing his attack by this provoking circumstance, he might have forced the Spaniards to an engagement off Flamborough-head; and it is asserted by a respectable cotemporary historian ^h, that so great was the distress of the Spanish fleet, and such the admiral's dread of the long and dangerous voyage before him, that he would have surrendered without resistance, in case he had been attacked. But he was saved from the disgrace in which this action would have involved his name, through the necessity under which the English admiral found himself of returning to England, to supply the deficiency of his stores.

LORD Howard had reason to be incensed against those, by whose negligence he was thus disabled from completing the glory which his gallant conduct had procured him. In the issue, however,

Disasters
which befell
the Armada.

it

^h Grotius.

it would have been unfortunate, if he had delayed his return. The two fleets sailing in opposite directions, were not far distant from each other, when a dreadful storm arose. The English reached home, though not without difficulty, yet without sustaining any considerable loss. But the Spaniards were exposed to the storm in all its rage, and became no less objects of pity to their enemies, than they had lately been of dread and terror. Having hitherto kept near each other, lest the English should have renewed the attack, this circumstance proved the first cause of their disasters. The ships were driven violently against each other, and thereby many of them were rendered an easy prey to the fury of the waves. At length they were dispersed. In order to enable them to ride out the storm, the horses, mules, and baggage were thrown over-board. This precaution was of advantage only to such of the ships as were stronger, or more fortunate than the rest. Some of them were dashed to pieces on the rocks of Norway, or sunk in the middle of the ocean. Others were thrown upon the coasts of Scotland, and the Western Isles. And more than thirty were driven by another storm, which overtook them from the west, on different parts of the coasts of Ireland. Of these, some afterwards reached home in the most shattered condition, under the vice-admiral Ricaldo; others were shipwrecked among the rocks and shallows; and of those which reached the shore, the crews were barbarously murdered; from an apprehension, it was pretended, that in a country where there were so many disaffected catholics, it would have been dangerous to shew mercy to so great a number of the enemy. The duke de Medina having kept out in the open seas, escaped shipwreck, and arrived at Saint Andero in Biscay about the end of September.

THE calamities of the Spaniards did not end with their arrival in Spain. Two of the galleons which had withstood the storm, were accidentally set on fire, and consumed to ashes in the harbour. Great numbers, especially of the nobility and gentry, accustomed to a life of ease and pleasure, had died at sea; and many more died afterwards of diseases occasioned by the hardships they had undergone.

VERY different accounts are given by different historians, of the total loss sustained. Some assert that it amounted to thirty-two ships, and ten thousand men; but others without pretending to ascertain the number of men, which could not, they say, be less than fifteen thousand, affirm that more than eighty ships were taken, destroyed, or lostⁱ. This dreadful calamity was sensibly felt all over Spain and there was scarcely a single family of rank in the kingdom that did not go into mourning for the death of some near relation; insomuch that Philip dreading the effect which this universal face of sorrow might produce upon the minds of the people, imitated the conduct of the Roman senate, and published an edict to abridge the time of public mourning^k.

WHILE the people of Spain were thus overwhelmed with affliction, there was nothing to be heard in England and the united provinces but the voice of festivity and joy. In Holland medals were struck in commemoration of the happy event; and

Rejoicings
in England
and Holland.

ⁱ As the president de Thou, who lived at the time of this memorable event, pretends not to determine to which of these relations the greatest regard is due, it would be in vain at this time to attempt to decide betwixt them.

^k Meteren, lib. xiv. Grotii Historia, lib. i. Campana Decad. vii. lib. i. Ferreras and Thuanus.

and in both countries, days of solemn thanksgiving to Heaven were appointed for their deliverance. Elizabeth went for this purpose to St. Paul's cathedral, seated in a triumphal chariot, and surrounded with her ministers and nobles, amidst a great number of flags and colours which had been taken from the enemy; while the citizens were ranged in arms on each side of the streets through which she passed. Nor did the destruction of the Armada give joy only to the English and Dutch. All Europe had trembled at the thoughts of its success. For although it can hardly be supposed that Philip was so romantic as to flatter himself with the hopes of attaining universal monarchy, yet it is not to be imagined that he aspired only at the conquest of England and Holland. He had before this time formed the plan, which he afterwards pursued, of subduing France. Nor can it be believed that any thing less would have satisfied his ambition, than the subjection of every protestant state in Europe, and the utter extirpation of the reformed religion.

Philip's magnanimous behaviour.

His ambition was, on this occasion, severely mortified. But as he possessed in a high degree the art of concealing his emotions, he received intelligence of the disaster that had befallen him, with an appearance of magnanimity and resignation to the will of Heaven, which, if it was not affected, deserved the highest praise. He returned thanks to God, that the calamity was not greater. He issued orders to have the utmost care taken of the sick and wounded who had survived the general catastrophe. And instead of forbidding the duke de Medina Sidonia to come to court, as is alleged by some historians, he wrote to him in the most obliging terms, expressing his gratitude for the zeal which he had discovered in his service; and observing, that no man could answer for

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for the success of an enterprize, which, like that wherein the duke had been engaged, depended on the winds and waves¹.

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PHILIP's behaviour towards the duke of Parma on this difficult occasion, contained the same display of justice that appeared in his letter to Medina Sidonia. Notwithstanding the many proofs which Farnese had exhibited in the sight of all Europe, of indefatigable vigour and activity, as well as of heroic valour, yet the failure of the expedition against England was by some ascribed to his negligence in making the necessary preparations, and by others, to his excessive caution or timidity. But Philip refused to listen to these groundless calumnies. He still continued to repose in the duke his wonted confidence; and testified towards him all that attachment and esteem which his conduct in the Netherlands had deserved. The truth is, that as the principal error in conducting the expedition had been committed, by neglecting the duke of Parma's advice, so no person was more deeply interested in its success; since, if the Armada had opened a passage for his troops, the whole direction of the enterprize would have belonged to him, and the noblest opportunity, to which his ambition could aspire, have been given of exerting those illustrious military talents which have acquired him such distinguished renown.

THE duke had the greater reason to entertain the hopes of victory, in case his army could have been transported to England, as Elizabeth had, from her partiality for the earl of Leicester, bestowed the chief command of her land forces on that nobleman, who was so little entitled, either by his courage or his abilities, to so great a trust. Her good fortune, or more properly the kind providence

¹ Ferreras, part xv. Strada, lib. v.

vidence of Heaven, so conspicuously exercised in her behalf, saved her from the consequences with which this unjustifiable step might have been attended. It was perhaps the only imprudent measure of which, at this difficult crisis, she can be justly accused; and she fully atoned for it by the wisdom, vigour, and fortitude which she displayed in every other part of her conduct.

P A R T II.

Situation of
Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH's situation now was extremely different from what it had ever been since her accession to the throne. Having been delivered some time before the present period from the queen of Scots, who had long been a principal cause of her inquietude; she had found the art of appeasing the resentment, and even of conciliating the favour, of the son of that unfortunate princess. She had united her catholic and protestant subjects in her defence, and had triumphed over her implacable enemy the king of Spain. She had not the same reason as formerly to dread the power of that monarch, which he had exerted in vain for her destruction, and she had very little reason to apprehend that he would soon renew his attempt to invade her dominions. To prevent this, by furnishing him with employment elsewhere, had been long her principal motive for taking such deep concern in the affairs of the Netherlands. This motive did not subsist in the same degree of force as formerly, yet she resolved to adhere faithfully to her engagements with the States, and still to assist and support them. After Leicester's resignation, she had conferred the command of her troops in the Netherlands upon lord Willoughby, subjecting this nobleman, however,

Lord Willoughby.

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however to the authority of the states, and leaving the command in chief to prince Maurice, to whom the States themselves had lately committed it.

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IT was not gratitude alone, or a respect for the memory of the late prince of Orange, that determined the confederated provinces to repose so great a trust at this perilous conjuncture in his son, who was at this time only in the twenty-first year of his age. Maurice had, from his earliest youth, given proof of superior prudence and capacity; and his conduct afterwards fulfilled the most sanguine expectations of his countrymen, with much less moderation and self-command, and less too of the art of governing the minds of men, which William possessed in so eminent a degree, Maurice was superior to his father in military accomplishments, and of these the confederacy stood more in need at the present period, than of political abilities.

Prince Maurice.

MAURICE had no opportunity of exercising his talents for war, from the time of Leicester's departure till the fate of the Spanish Armada was decided. A great number of his best troops had been put on board the fleet commanded by Justin de Nassau; all the garrisons of the maritime towns had been augmented, lest the Spaniards should have attempted to make a descent; and there was no body of forces left, sufficient to enable him to take advantage of the duke of Parma's inactivity, by undertaking any military enterprize.

THE first opportunity of action was afforded him by a resolution which the duke formed, as soon as he perceived there was no longer any prospect of invading England, to besiege the town of Bergen-op-Zoom. This town, as its name imports, is situated on the river Zoom, at a little distance from the place where that river falls into the Scheld;

The duke of Parma mediates the siege of Bergen-op-Zoom.

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and

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and by this last river the territory of Bergen is separated from the isle of Tolen. Farnese thinking it necessary towards the success of his intended enterprize, to be master of this island, sent count Charles of Mansvelt with a body of eight hundred foot to take possession of it; and in order to conceal his design, he ordered them to make a feint of marching towards Heusden. This artifice however had not the desired success. Maurice had taken care to have both Bergen and Tolen properly furnished with troops for their defence.

AT low water it is practicable to pass over to Tolen upon foot, and in this way count Mansvelt endeavoured to approach it. But the governor, count Solmes, was so well prepared to receive him, that Mansvelt was soon obliged to abandon his attempt, and in his retreat he lost about four hundred men. In the mean time the duke of Parma had advanced with his army, and invested the town on the land side, without having met with any considerable opposition. But the besieged beheld his operations with great indifference; their communication with Holland and Zealand was still as free and open as before. In order to intercept it, they knew that the enemy must first reduce two strong forts which stood between the town and the Scheld, and this they trusted could not be accomplished before the approach of winter.

October.

He is deceived by
two British
soldiers.

THE duke immediately began his operations with an attack upon one of these forts; but before he had made any considerable progress, he conceived hopes of acquiring possession of it in a way much more easy and expeditious than by open force. Two soldiers belonging to the garrison, whom some historians call Scots, and others English, having gone over to Farnese, offered to deliver the fort to him, on condition of his granting them

them a suitable reward for so great a service. Farnese lent a willing ear to their proposal, and gave them the most flattering promises; but as he still suspected them of insincerity, he made them confirm what they had told him by an oath, and required that they should be carried bound in the midst of the soldiers whom he intended to employ in executing the plan which they had suggested. To this, as well as to the oath required from them, they readily agreed. The duke could no longer remain distrustful, and ordered De Leyva, one of his bravest officers, to be ready immediately after sun-set with three thousand infantry, to advance towards the fort. De Leyva set out at the time appointed, and arrived at the gate when it was beginning to grow dark. Upon a signal given by the two British soldiers the port was opened, but no sooner had about fifty of the Spaniards entered, than the portcullis was let down, and all the rest excluded. Those who had entered perceived the treachery of their guides, but being more solicitous to save their own lives than to take vengeance on the traitors, they suffered them to escape, and the Spaniards themselves were instantly surrounded by the garrison, and either put to the sword or taken prisoners.

Of those who were without, only such as were near the gate were acquainted with what had happened, while the rest who were ignorant of it still pressing forward, made it impossible for the foremost to retire. These men, rendered desperate by their perilous situation, attempted to scale the ramparts, but they were soon repulsed by the garrison, who were every where upon their guard. The guns of the fort began to play upon them. The darkness of the night increased their confusion, and they fell into an ambush which the garrison had prepared.

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The duke
abandons his
attempt on
Bergen.

prepared. A great number was killed, and many were swallowed up in the mud and water with which the fort was surrounded.

AFTER this misfortune the duke of Parma despaired of succeeding in his enterprize. Heavy rains had lately fallen, his troops were begun to grow sickly, and all the country round, which was naturally wet, was become almost inaccessible to his convoys of Provisions. Determined by these considerations, he raised the siege before the middle of November, after fortifying some passes in the neighbourhood of the place, to restrain the excursions of the garrison ^m.

No sooner had he drawn off his troops from Bergen, than having put the Italians and Spaniards into winter-quarters, he sent the Germans under count Peter Ernest de Mansvelt to lay siege to Wachtendonck, in Upper Guelderland, a small place, but strongly fortified, and situated in the midst of a marshy soil. Farnese was, notwithstanding these circumstances, determined to employ his troops in reducing it, by loud complaints which were made to him of the continual depredations of the garrison. This garrison consisted of troops formed by the celebrated Schenck, whose bravery would have baffled the utmost efforts of count Mansvelt, had it not been for a circumstance which intitles the siege of this little town to a place in history. It was in this siege that bombs, the late invention of an inhabitant of Venlo, were first employed. To save the town from destruction, the citizens prevailed on the garrison to consent to a surrender, but not till they had sallied out and killed a great number of the enemy; many of whom likewise perished by the inclemency of the season, and the humidity of the air and soil.

The inven-
tion of
bombs.

IN

^m Grotius Hist. lib. i. Bentivoglio, and Meteren, anno 1588.

IN consequence of the loss of men sustained at this siege and that of Bergen, the duke of Parma found his army exceedingly diminished. This consideration alone must have been a sensible mortification to a general of so great activity and enterprise, but he was still more deeply mortified at the difficulty which he found in supporting the forces that still remained under his command. They had begun to murmur on account of the arrears which were due to them, and he dreaded the loss of that authority over them which he had hitherto maintained. He had earnestly solicited remittances from the court of Spain, and had represented the fatal consequences which must attend the irregular payment of his troops. But his requests had not for some time past been listened to as formerly, and some of the bills which he drew had been returned unpaid. This was owing partly to the low state of Philip's finances, which, great as his resources were, had been overburdened by the enormous expence in which his late armament had involved him; and partly to the malignity and envy of the Spanish ministers. The duke could not conceal his chagrin at the disappointment, which was greatly augmented by the decline of his health, and the symptoms of a dropsy, which some years afterwards put a period to his lifeⁿ.

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Anxiety of
the Duke of
Parma.

IN this situation he received greater satisfaction from an event which was one of the consequences of the intrigues of the earl of Leicester. The garrisons of several towns had, through the influence of that nobleman's partizans, or from the deficiencies in their pay occasioned by his misconduct, shewn great contempt for the authority of the States and prince Maurice; but they had all been brought

Gertrudenburg, betrayed to the Spaniards.

ⁿ Meteren, p. 503.

brought back to their duty, except the garrison of St. Gertrudenburg, which consisted of one thousand five hundred foot and three hundred horse, partly Dutch and partly English. This garrison having indulged themselves in greater excesses than any other, were conscious of such a degree of guilt as they thought could not easily be forgiven: they were therefore still as refractory and seditious as ever, maintaining openly, that they were accountable to none but the queen of England; and seizing upon ships, and carrying off plunder from the friends as well as the enemies of the confederacy. The States apprehensive of their delivering the town to the enemy, applied every soothing expedient to prevent them. They offered them a full pardon of their offences, got lord Willoughby to interpose his influence, and made immediate payment of a great proportion of their arrears; but all endeavours were ineffectual. In the mean time Lanzavecchia, the governor of Breda, being well informed of their temper and disposition, employed secret agents to confirm them in their seditious purposes, holding forth to them the rewards which they might hope for from the duke of Parma, while there was nothing to be expected from the queen of England or the States, but either an ignominious punishment, or perpetual diffidence and contempt. They hesitated for some time; but when an offer was made to them in the name of the duke of Parma of full payment of their arrears, besides a sum of money equal to five years pay, they were unable to resist the allurements; they agreed to give up the town on the terms proposed, and began to prepare for the execution of their design, by disarming the inhabitants. Upon receiving intelligence of this infamous transaction, prince Maurice set out by sea with a body of troops, in order to reduce the garrison by force of arms. But
before

before he had time to make any progress in the siege, having been informed that the duke of Parma was upon his march to oppose him with a superior army, he thought it prudent to retire. The duke soon afterwards entered the town, and having fulfilled his engagements to the garrison, he bestowed the government upon Lanzavecchia, as a reward for the service he had performed. Gertrudenburg was the first town in Holland which the Spaniards had acquired since their expulsion from that province about twelve years before; and it gave Farnese, on that account, the most sensible joy and satisfaction. The States on the other hand expressed their indignation against the traitors, by proscribing them; and it ought not to be forgotten, that through various accidents almost all of them fell into the hands of the confederates, and had the sentence of proscription executed upon them with the utmost rigour.

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FROM Gertrudenburg the Spanish army was sent under count Charles of Mansvelt, to reduce the towns of Heusden and Romersval, and the fort of Louvestein; but all their attempts on these places were baffled by the activity and vigour of prince Maurice and count Hohenloe.

THE duke of Parma returned to Brussels, and not long afterwards he set out for Germany, to drink the waters at Spa, although it was believed he would not have gone at this season, which was the most proper for all military operations, if his army had been in a condition to enter upon any enterprize worthy of his former fame°. During his absence, prince Maurice was barely able to prevent count Mansvelt from making any new acquisition. The forces of these two generals were nearly equal, neither

The duke of
Parma at
Spa.

May.

• Grotius, p. 132.

neither party was inclined to risk an engagement, and no rencounter past between them that deserves to be recorded.

SOME important services were in the mean time performed by the indefatigable Schenck in the interior provinces. Having some time before the present period, proposed to the States to build a fort upon the Rhine, at the place where that river divides itself into two branches, and forms the isle of Betuwe^p, the States approved highly of his proposal, and furnished him with every thing necessary for carrying it into execution. He finished it with great dispatch, and having fixed there his head-quarters, he over-ran all the country round, and seized every favourable opportunity of annoying the enemy. He took the city of Bonne, upon the Rhine, by surprise in the night. Having been informed that a body of troops were upon their march to reinforce Verdugo, the governor of Groningen, and were escorting a sum of money to that place for the payment of the garrison, he chose his ground with so much skill, and attacked them with such impetuosity and ardour, that he routed them, and got possession of the money without the loss of a single man. But there was nothing on which he was so intent as the recovery of Nimeguen, which some years before he himself had conquered for the Spaniards. Nimeguen stands on the banks of the Waal, at the distance of only a few hours sail from the fort which Schenck had constructed. Having embarked his troops, he set out with an intention to reach the town about the middle of the night. Through some accident or mistake he did not arrive till the morning, when he happened unfortunately to land at a house where a number of persons were

^p Called anciently Batavia.

were assembled for the celebration of a wedding. By these persons the alarm was instantly given to the rest of the inhabitants, who were well acquainted with the enmity with which Schenck had for some time past been animated against them, and knew that an universal pillage would be the consequence of his success. They ran to arms from every quarter, and made a furious attack upon his men, and, notwithstanding the most intrepid resistance, drove them towards their boats in great confusion. Schenck endeavoured to rally them, but in vain. The town's people pursued, and slew many of them while they were attempting to escape. Schenck himself was wounded, and immediately afterwards his boat was overfet, and he, and all on board were drowned. Such was the fate of this brave man at the age of forty, by whom, ever since his revolt, the Spaniards had been subjected to perpetual apprehensions and alarms ⁹.

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Death of
Schenck.

No other material transaction occurred during this campaign but the siege of Rhinberg, which was undertaken at the earnest desire of the elector of Cologne, and the charge of it committed by the duke of Parma to the marquis of Varambon. Colonel Vere, an English officer of high reputation, was sent by the States to the relief of the besieged, and between him and Varambon a bloody battle was fought, in which the English commander gained a complete victory. After this he entered the town, and fortified it so strongly, as enabled the inhabitants for some time longer to preserve their liberty and independence.

Battle of
Rhinberg.

It was now the end of autumn, and the duke of Parma was returned from Spa. Soon after his return, his apprehensions with regard to the consequences of the irregular payment of his troops, were

The duke of
Parma re-
turns from
Spa.

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1589.

were verified by the mutiny of a Spanish regiment which lay in garrison at Courtray. From complaints the soldiers proceeded to threats, and at last openly refused to obey his commands. With the utmost difficulty he raised money sufficient to appease them. But as this was the first sedition which had happened since the commencement of his government, he was the more sensibly afflicted by it, and dreaded, that the example which it afforded, would soon be followed by the garrisons in other towns.

The sur-
prise of Bre-
da.

1590.

THIS event happened about the end of the year 1589; and in the month of February immediately following, another misfortune happened, which convinced the duke, that prince Maurice was an antagonist of a character extremely different from that of any other with whom he had hitherto contended. This was the loss of the important city of Breda, of which Maurice got possession by a singular stratagem, suggested to him by the master of a boat, called Adrian Vandenberg, who had sometimes supplied the town and garrison with turf for firing. When Lanzavecchia, the governor, was at Breda, all vessels which came there were carefully examined; but the duke of Parma, having rewarded this crafty Italian, for the part which he acted in corrupting the garrison of St. Gertrudenburg, with the government of that town, still suffered him to retain that of Breda. Lanzavecchia found it necessary to be often absent from the latter of these places; and, during his absence, usually committed the charge of it to his son. Vandenberg having observed that on these occasions there was commonly great negligence in searching his boat, founded upon this circumstance his plan for taking the citadel by surprise. It was communicated to prince Maurice,

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rice, who readily embraced it, and immediately applied himself to put it in execution. The boat was loaded in appearance with turf, as usual ; but the turf was supported by a floor of planks fixed at the distance of several feet from the bottom ; and under this floor seventy select soldiers were placed, under the command of Charles Harauguer*, an officer of distinguished valour and capacity. They had but a few miles to sail ; yet, through unexpected accidents, several days passed before they could reach Breda. The wind turned against them, the melting ice retarded their course, and the boat having struck upon a bank, was so much damaged, that the soldiers were for some time up to the knees in water. Their provisions were almost spent, and one of their number was seized with a violent cough, which, if it continued, they foresaw would certainly occasion a discovery. This man had the generosity to offer them his sword, and to entreat them to kill him. They as generously declined it ; and being resolved to run all risks, rather than embroil their hands in the blood of their companion, they still persisted in their design. Happily their virtue was rewarded : the soldier's cough left him, and even the leak in their vessel was stopt by some accidental cause.

IN order to secure the absence of Lanzavecchia, whose vigilance there was much ground to dread, prince Maurice had made a feint of marching against Gertrudenburg, and this artifice produced the desired effect. Lanzavecchia was absent from Breda when the boat arrived. It was admitted within the fortifications of the castle, and the search was made in the most superficial manner.

Not-

* A native of Cambray.

NOTWITHSTANDING this, there was still the utmost danger of a discovery, and it would certainly have been made, had not Vandenberg possessed an extraordinary share of address and art, which he exerted on this occasion. There being a scarcity of fuel in the castle, the turf was immediately purchased; the soldiers of the garrison were set to work in carrying it ashore, and so great a number of hands were employed, that they would soon have uncovered the planks, and thereby have detected the plot, had not Vandenberg, pretending to be fatigued with labour and watching, and unable to assist the soldiers any longer in unloading, first amused them with discourse, and then invited them to join him in drinking some wine which he had provided. His offer was readily accepted. The night came on, and the Spanish soldiers were all either asleep or drunk. Vandenberg then set out, in order to give notice of his success to prince Maurice and count Hohenloe, who, according to agreement, had in great silence brought forward a body of forces within a little distance of the town.

ABOUT the middle of the night, Harauguer issued forth from his retreat; and having divided his band into two bodies, he attacked, at the same time, both the guards which were placed at the gate towards the country, and those which were stationed at another gate which led from the citadel to the town, and meeting with little resistance, he secured possession of the gates. Young Lanzavecchia rushed out against him with between thirty and forty of the garrison; but these men were not able to withstand the determined and desperate valour of the assailants. They were all either put to the sword or dispersed, and Lanzavecchia himself was wounded and taken prisoner.

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THE alarm was soon communicated to the town, in which there was a numerous garrison, consisting of five companies of Italian foot, and one of horse. The citizens offered to co-operate with the garrison in defending the fortifications, till the duke of Parma should come to their relief; but this cowardly garrison, being struck with an universal panic, and having no commander in chief to direct their operations, suddenly forsook the town. In the mean time prince Maurice arrived in the citadel, and the inhabitants, having now no garrison to support them, sent a trumpet with an offer to surrender, on condition that they should not be plundered. And to this prince Maurice readily agreed; but required that they should pay him ninety thousand florins to be distributed among his troops.

MAURICE received the greater satisfaction from this acquisition, which had been attended with the loss of only one man, as Breda had been for many years the hereditary property of his family; and for the same reason the citizens were the less reluctant in submitting to his authority. He appointed the brave Harauguer to be governor of the town, and liberally rewarded Vandenberg, and all the other sailors and soldiers, in proportion to their merit.

THE duke of Parma, on the other hand, was extremely mortified with what had happened, and highly incensed against his countrymen the Italians, who had so basely deserted the town committed to their care. He ordered the officers to be arrested, and afterwards commanded all of them to be executed, agreeably to the sentence of a court-martial, except one, whom he pardoned in consideration of his youth^t.

OLD Lanzavecchia's imprudence in committing so important a charge to so young a man as his son,

^t Grotius. Bentivoglio.

son, was already severely punished by his son's imprisonment, and the loss of the government of Breda. He punished himself still farther, by resigning his government of Gertrudenburg. Such were the bitter fruits of that corruption for which this man had been so lately rewarded. According to the principles which warriors and politicians are ready to adopt, his conduct deserved the reward which was bestowed upon it; but to the friends of virtue it will give satisfaction to observe, that, in the course of providence, punishment is inflicted sometimes not upon the treacherous alone, but on those too by whom they are prompted, or encouraged in their treachery.

MEANWHILE Farnese resolving to recover the town, if possible, before prince Maurice should have time to secure it, sent count Mansvelt against it with a part of the army. But Maurice had no sooner acquired possession of the place, than he furnished it with provisions sufficient for many months, and stationed a garrison in it consisting of one thousand two hundred foot and four hundred horse. Mansvelt did not therefore think it expedient to lay immediate siege to Breda; but in order to cut off the communication of the garrison with Holland, he attempted to reduce a strong fort in the mouth of the river Mark, which commanded the navigation of that river. From this attempt however he was obliged to desist, after having lost between six and seven hundred men. He then built another fort at the mouth of the river, and began to make preparations for besieging the town itself. In order to divert him from the prosecution of his design, prince Maurice marched with a body of about five thousand men towards Nimeguen, resolving to besiege that town in case Mansvelt did not relinquish his present enterprize.

FARNESE

FARNESE, sensible of the great importance of Nimeguen, sent orders to count Mansvelt to lead his army thither without delay. Maurice perceived then that it was impracticable for him to attempt the siege with any probability of success, and encamped his troops in the Betuwe, on the north side of the Waal, opposite to Nimeguen. Having fortified the banks of the river, to prevent count Mansvelt from transporting his forces, he built, in sight of the enemy, a strong fort, afterwards called by the name of Knotzenburg, directly opposite to the town; by which he not only deprived Nimeguen of all the advantages which it had hitherto derived from its situation; but, as the cannon of this fort could reach the town, the inhabitants were exposed to continual danger. After having finished this important work, he dug a navigable canal across the Betuwe, from the Rhine to the Waal. This wise expedient rendered the navigation of the confederates in those parts secure, by making it unnecessary for their ships to pass by Nimeguen; and it was of great advantage to all the country round, by lessening the violence of the inundations to which that part of the Netherlands is sometimes liable. The States of Guelderland and Overysfel had a just sense of the benefits which they derived from his operations, and they testified their gratitude by electing him governor of these two provinces.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND
KING OF SPAIN.

BOOK XXII.

PART I.

FROM the capacity and vigour which Maurice had already displayed, Philip might have perceived that he should probably find full employment in the Netherlands for all the forces which, in the present state of his finances, he was able to support. And considering the unfortunate issue of his enterprize against Elizabeth, and how much the reputation of his arms and counsels had suffered from his long unsuccessful struggle with the inhabitants of the United Provinces, it might have been expected that he would have seen the absurdity of that preposterous ambition which had led him to undertake new conquests before he had reduced his own dominions under obedience. It does not appear that he ever seriously entertained the thoughts of renewing his attempt against Eng-

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land;

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land; but having never relinquished his designs on France, he had maintained his connexions with the heads of the catholic league; and notwithstanding the difficulty which he found in paying his army in Flanders, he had from time to time supplied them with considerable sums of money.

The catholic
league.

THESE factious leaders had now more occasion than ever for his assistance. After the treaty mentioned above, which Philip concluded with the duke of Guise at Joinville in the year 1585, the flames of war between the catholics and protestants had been kindled afresh from one end of the kingdom to the other. Henry, well acquainted with the secret intentions of Guise and his partizans, which were no less hostile to himself than to the Calvinists, would gladly have employed all his power for their destruction; but he soon perceived that he was unable to contend openly with so great a force as they had provided against him, and therefore disguising his resentment for the affront offered to his authority, he resolved to accede to the league, in hopes of acquiring the direction of it, by declaring himself its head and protector. In consequence of this resolution, great preparations were made for prosecuting the war against the Calvinists, and three different armies were raised. One of these Henry commanded in person; another was sent under the duke de Joyeuse against the king of Navarre; and the third was led by the duke of Guise, to oppose a numerous army of Germans, who were upon their march to the assistance of the Hugonots. Joyeuse lost both his army and his life in the battle of Coutras; but the duke of Guise, who made up for the small number of his troops by his superior conduct and intrepidity, proved victorious over the Germans, and thereby acquired an increase of popularity and fame, which gave him uncontrollable influence over almost all the catholics in the kingdom.

dom. Elated with his success, and conscious of his power, this ambitious leader could no longer delay the execution of his designs; but resolved, after deposing the king, and confining him to a cloister, to place the infirm and aged cardinal of Bourbon upon the throne; hoping to engross the whole administration, and to secure the succession to himself, in the event of the cardinal's demise. Henry beheld with much dread the precipice on which he stood; and in order to avoid it, had recourse to that detestable expedient, of which, in his youth, he had shewn his approbation, in the massacre of St. Bartholemew, by commanding both the duke of Guise, and his brother the cardinal, to be assassinated.

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THIS murder, which even Henry pretended to justify only by the plea of necessity, did not produce the effect which he expected. Instead of intimidating his enemies, it served to inflame their minds with wrath and indignation. In Paris, where the spirit of the league had long raged with the utmost fury, the people broke his statues to pieces, the ecclesiastics declaimed against him in the bitterest and most abusive terms, and the Sorbonne declared him to have forfeited the crown. His subjects almost every where rose up in arms against him, and the duke of Mayenne, brother of the Guises, a prince of extraordinary prudence and capacity, was chosen commander in chief in his brother's room.

IN this situation Henry had no resource left but in the king of Navarre, whom he had deceived and persecuted. But this generous and heroic prince readily forgot the injuries he had received from him, and made haste to march with a numerous army to his assistance. Thus powerfully supported, Henry became an overmatch for his enemies; and he would soon have compelled the

city of Paris to surrender, when a period was put to his life by a fanatic monk, who being seduced by his superiors, burned with the desire of meriting Heaven, by embruining his hands in the blood of his lawful prince. Such was the unfortunate end of Henry III. the last of the race of Valois, which had reigned over France for almost three hundred years.

Accession of
Henry IV.

THE king of Navarre, the undoubted heir of the crown, and whom the deceased monarch had nominated his successor, was immediately proclaimed king in the camp, by the name of Henry IV. a name which will be for ever respected, not by the French nation alone, but by every friend of mankind and of virtue. Brought up in the hardest school of adversity, patient, frugal, and laborious; brave and wise; sincere, humane, and generous; of the strictest integrity, and the most untainted honour; he had long commanded the admiration of his enemies, as well as of the impartial world. Never did any prince succeed to a throne, adorned with more splendid, more substantial, or more amiable accomplishments; yet so fierce was the spirit of religious bigotry with which his subjects were inflamed; so great their abhorrence of Calvinism; and such their dread, that Henry who was himself a Calvinist, although the most moderate of his sect, would in imitation of the queen of England, overturn the popish religion, that many of the catholics instantly forsook his camp; nor would any of them have been persuaded to remain with him, had he not given them ground to entertain hopes of his conversion.

IN Paris he had a numerous Party who would willingly have recognised his right, in case he would have agreed to embrace the popish faith. There were others who, under the pretence of religion, had no other end in view but to secure and perpetuate

uate that unbounded licence which they had long enjoyed, of perpetrating the most atrocious crimes; and there were many, who having been gained over by Spanish influence, had, in concert with Mendoza the Spanish ambassador, and Cajetan the pope's legate; a partizan of Spain, formed the design of conferring the crown, either on Philip himself, or his daughter Isabella ^a.

THE duke of Mayenne, who had adopted his brother's plan in all its branches, hoped to make these parties subservient to his own elevation to the throne. This design, however, he concealed with care; and that he might have leisure to prepare the means of putting it into execution, he prevailed on a great majority to concur in electing the cardinal of Bourbon king; to which measure likewise, Philip actuated by a similar intention, gave his consent.

HENRY in the mean time finding himself unable, from the great desertion of his forces, to maintain his present situation before Paris, retired into Normandy, to wait there, till succours, which he expected from Elizabeth, should arrive. Mayenne putting himself at the head of an army much more numerous than that of the king, pursued and attacked him in his fortifications near the town of Arques; but having been repulsed with great slaughter, and having suffered afterwards a total overthrow in the battle of Ivry, in which, as on many other occasions, Henry's superior bravery supplied his want of numbers, Mayenne was obliged, with the shattered remains of his army, to take refuge in the metropolis. There he stayed no longer than till he had consulted with the duke of Nemours, the governor, with regard to the proper measures of defence, in case the city should be besieged by the victorious army; after which he
set

^a Grand-daughter of Henry II.

set out for Picardy, to meet the duke of Parma, from whom he expected a reinforcement of troops. The king arrived soon after in the neighbourhood of Paris, and having made himself master of the course of the Seyne, and the Marne, and blocked up every entry by which provisions might be conveyed into the town, he invested it on every side, and soon reduced the inhabitants to extreme necessity.

By the persuasion however of their leaders, seconded by the Spanish minister and the pope's legate ; by the decrees of the Sorbonne, and the harangues of the clergy ; they were confirmed in the resolution which they had formed from the beginning, to endure every calamity, rather than receive an heretical king, whose authority they were taught to believe they could not acknowledge, without endangering their salvation.

In their present distressful situation they had no prospect of relief, but from the arms of Spain ; nor was Philip less inclined now to interpose in their behalf, and that of the league in general, than formerly. The affairs of France were at this time the principal object of his attention ; and he would gladly have exerted himself against the king with his utmost vigour, especially as the cardinal of Bourbon was lately dead, if the present juncture had been favourable to his ambitious design, of seizing the monarchy for himself, or his daughter ; by which, more than by zeal for the catholic faith, he had long been actuated. But having penetrated into the views of Mayenne, and found that from him and all his party he had reason to expect the most strenuous opposition ; he considered, that if Henry were utterly subdued, the catholics, standing then no longer in need of his assistance, would probably unite against him, and without regard to the obligations which he had laid them under, render all his expence and labour fruitless.

fruitless. He resolved therefore, agreeably to the advice of the duke of Parma, to protract the war, and to afford the league only such assistance as might prevent the king from acquiring an entire ascendant over them; hoping thereby to waste the strength of both the contending parties, and sooner or later to oblige them to comply with whatever terms he should be pleased to prescribe.

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CONFORMABLY to this plan, the duke of Parma, with whom Mayenne had an interview at Condé, gave him only two thousand seven hundred foot and eight hundred horse. But as this reinforcement was inadequate to the purpose for which it had been solicited, Philip became apprehensive that the resolution of the besieged might fail, and dreaded, that if Henry were once master of the capital, a prince of so great ability and address might soon compel the rest of the kingdom to submit to his authority. To prevent this, he resolved to postpone every consideration of prudence and interest to the raising of the siege; and sent positive orders to the duke of Parma, to conduct his army to France for this purpose, with the utmost expedition. Farnese, though possessed of capacity and courage equal to the most difficult and dangerous enterprise, would gladly have diverted Philip from his design. He represented to him the dangerous consequences with which the absence of his troops from the Netherlands would be attended; and he attempted to make him sensible of the extreme uncertainty of those advantages which he expected to derive from taking so deep an interest in the affairs of France. But Philip blinded by his ambition, could not relinquish those delusive hopes which he had long fondly indulged, of adding France to his other dominions. He was deaf to the duke's prudent remonstrances, and only listened to his advice, so far as to consent that he might return

return to the Low Countries, when the siege of Paris should be raised.

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The duke of
Parma's first
expedition
into France.

FINDING the king thus obstinate and inflexible, Farnese committed the government, during his absence, to count Peter Ernest of Mansvelt, and appointed his son count Charles to command the small number of troops, which he designed to leave behind him for the defence of the Netherlands. He then applied with great anxiety to make the necessary preparations for his march. For he was well aware of the difficulty which he must encounter in his intended enterprize against a prince of so great abilities as the king of France, in the midst of his dominions, and at the head of a victorious army, commanded by a gallant and almost invincible nobility. This consideration however, far from intimidating him, served only to make him exert with more than ordinary vigour, those illustrious talents with which he was endowed; left now, when he was about to enter the lists with so great a rival for military fame, he should forfeit that high renown which his former achievements had procured him.

Comparison
of him with
Henry.

HENRY was at this time about forty years of age, and Farnese a few years older. From their earliest youth they had been alike distinguished by the love of arms; and had past their lives either in learning, or in practising the art of war. They possessed alike the talent of conciliating the affections of their troops, without any relaxation of discipline, or diminution of authority. They were equal too in personal courage, in quick discernment, and in fertility of genius. But the king was more prompt in his decisions; the duke more cautious and circumspect. The latter always cool, and master of himself, transgressed on no occasion the bounds of the strictest prudence; but the former
was

was often betrayed by his natural impetuosity and ardour, rather to act the part of a common soldier, than of a general, and unnecessarily to expose his person to danger. From the same impetuosity of temper, the king was ever fond of striking a decisive blow, by a pitched battle in the field; whereas the duke chose rather to accomplish his designs by stratagem and dexterity, without bloodshed. Notwithstanding this diversity in their characters, they were indisputably the greatest captains of the age in which they lived, and may be compared, without suffering by the comparison, with the most illustrious commanders either in ancient or in modern times.

FARNESE was ready to set out from Brussels in the beginning of August, with an army of fourteen thousand foot and three thousand horse. On his arrival in France, having convened his principal officers together, he explained to them the conduct proper to be observed in the present expedition; and represented the necessity of requiring a strict attention from every individual in the army, to all the rules of military discipline. They were about to enter into a kingdom, where the people being naturally jealous of the Spaniards, suspicions would be easily excited, that instead of having come to their assistance, he intended to reduce them under the government of Spain. Against giving ground for these suspicions, which might defeat the intentions of the king, they must be continually on their guard, and take effectual care to restrain the troops from offering any violence to the natives. They were ere long to pursue their march in the face of a bold and enterprising enemy; and for this reason it would be necessary that the most perfect order should be observed, that no tumult should be permitted in their quarters, and no soldier allowed to leave his colours night or day, upon

His wife
precautions.

upon any pretence whatever ; that the country should be reconnoitred with the utmost care ; that they should take up their quarters every evening a considerable time before sun-set ; that the troops should stand under their arms, till the intrenchments were completed ; and that their intrenchments should be as strongly fortified, as if the enemy were in sight.

THE duke secured the execution of these orders, by the activity and vigilance which he exerted. Although he had many officers of high reputation under him, yet he resolved not to put implicit trust in any of them. From charts or maps, joined to the information which he received from the natives, he had acquired a thorough knowledge of the country through which he was to pass. He heard in person the reports of all the parties which he sent to reconnoitre ; marked out the encampments with his own hand, and bestowed such particular attention on every thing which he deemed of the least importance, that he left himself no other time for repose, but the few hours between beating the reveille, and the marching of the troops.

IN order to preserve his men fresh and vigorous for the time of action, he marched gently forwards ; and did not arrive at Meaux, which is ten leagues distant from Paris, till the 23d of August. He was joined at Meaux by the duke de Mayenne, with ten thousand foot and one thousand five hundred horse ; and from this place he sent intelligence to the besieged, that he hoped to be able in a few days to relieve them.

Distress of
the Parisi-
ans.

THEIR patience was almost exhausted. They had been for many days reduced to the most deplorable condition. Great numbers had died of want, or of diseases occasioned by the unwholesome food to which they had been obliged to have recourse ;

recourse ; and though their bigotry made them still entertain the thoughts of a surrender with horror, it had required the utmost vigilance on the part of the governor, to prevent it from taking place. They believed it to be impossible for them to hold out even for the few days, at the end of which the duke of Parma had given them hopes of his arrival. Of this desperate situation, their leaders did not fail to inform him ; nor did he delay advancing towards them one moment longer than was necessary in order to secure a fortunate issue to his enterprize.

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HENRY had for several weeks entertained the most sanguine hopes of being able to terminate the siege before the duke could arrive ^b. He was now extremely chagrined and mortified, and was at the same time thrown into great perplexity, with respect to the measures proper to be pursued. Unwilling to quit his prize, when he was upon the point of seizing it, he would gladly have divided his army, and leaving a part of it to continue the blockade, have led the rest to meet the enemy. But as it had lately suffered great diminution by sickness, he apprehended that he would find sufficient employment for the whole, in defending himself against the Spaniards. After much hesitation he raised the siege, and set out to oppose the duke of Parma, before he should approach nearer the town ^c.

Henry raises
the siege.

HAVING advanced as far as Chelles (which lies about four leagues distant from Paris) he pitched his camp in a spacious plain, which is terminated by two hills of a gentle ascent, separated from each other by the road that leads to Meaux. The duke of Parma's army was encamped on the other side of these hills, and was well secured by strong intrench-

^b It had lasted four months.

^c His army amounted to twenty thousand foot and five thousand horse.

intrenchments. In this situation the two armies remained for several days. The duke did not now lie under the same necessity as before, of precipitating his approach to Paris, because the citizens having ventured, after the king's departure, to make excursions into the country, had furnished themselves with some provisions from the places adjacent; and the king durst not attack such strong intrenchments, defended by an army superior in number to his own. But being eager to engage, and dreading the daily diminution of his forces from the sickness which prevailed among them, Henry sent a defiance to the duke of Mayenne, calling upon him to quit his den, in which he lay more like a fox than a lion, that the contest between them might be decided, and an end put to the calamities of the kingdom.

Stratagem
of the duke
of Parma.

MAYENNE sent the herald who brought this challenge to the duke of Parma, who answered smiling, that his present conduct he perceived, was not agreeable to the king; but that he had been accustomed to fight, only when he himself thought proper, and not when it was convenient for his enemies; and he added, that far from declining battle, he would offer it as soon as the interest of the cause which he had come to support, should render it expedient. Agreeably to the spirit of this reply, Farnese kept his army within their lines for two days longer; during which time he was employed in examining the situation of the country, and in considering how he might accomplish the end of his expedition, without hazarding an engagement. Having at length fixed his plan of operations, without communicating it to the duke de Mayenne, or any other of his officers, he gave out, that he now intended to offer battle. Of the van, which consisted of two squadrons of lances, with all the light horse in his army, he gave the command

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command to the marquis De Renti, with instructions, that as soon as he should reach the top of the interjacent hill, he should spread out his troops, and make as large a front as possible; and then begin to descend slowly towards the enemy, but not to engage without further orders, whatever provocation should be given him. He committed the charge of the main army to the duke de Mayenne, and that of the rear to the Sieur de la Mothe; while he reserved liberty to himself, to ride from one part of the army to the other, as occasion should require.

WHEN the king was informed of this disposition and movement of the Spanish army, he could not doubt that the duke had at length resolved to try the fortune of a battle. His eyes sparkled with joy. He drew up his army in battle array, with the utmost celerity and skill; but resolved to wait till the enemy should descend to the plain, where he might enter the lists with them on equal terms.

WHEN the van of the Spanish army had formed so large a front, as totally obstructed the view of every thing behind them, the duke commanded De Renti to stop, and to wait for the king, in case he should think fit to ascend the hill. Then clapping spurs to his horse, he galloped back to the duke de Mayenne, who was advancing with the main army, and taking him by the hand, he said with a cheerful animated countenance. "Paris will soon be delivered now, my lord; but for this purpose we must turn back, and direct our march to another quarter." He then desired both Mayenne and La Mothe to march towards Lagny, a town on the other side of the Marne, and instructed them to take possession of the ground on this side, directly opposite to the town, and to employ all
their

their troops in drawing strong lines of circumvallation round their camp.

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THESE orders were executed with great expedition. A battery of the largest cannon was planted over against the town ; and the camp was fortified in such a manner with trenches, breast-works, and redoubts, as to render it impregnable.

WHEN this was done, the marquis De Renti, who for several hours had amused the enemy with hopes that he intended to come down from the hill, began to file off towards Lagny ; after having planted a body of select troops, under an officer of the name of Basta, in certain woody parts of the hill, to secure his retreat.

THE king in the mean time knew nothing of what had passed on the other side of the hill ; and when he saw the marquis De Renti depart, he sent a detachment after him to attack his rear, and if possible to discover the duke's design. But this detachment fell unexpectedly among the Spanish troops under Basta ; and a furious rencounter ensued, which continued with various success till night, when both parties retired to their respective camps. The king remained all night entirely ignorant of the operations of the enemy. He could not suppose that Farnese, a general so distinguished for his caution, would attempt to transport his forces over the Marne, in order to advance to Paris, on the other side of that river, while so strong a fortified pass as Lagny lay behind him. And it was still more difficult to believe, that in the face of such an army as lay ready to attack him, he would undertake the siege of Lagny ; especially as the river lay between him and that place. It was the last of these measures however, on which the duke of Parma had resolved ; and all his movements

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movements on the day before had been made in order to ensure success. Next morning the king received intelligence of his design, but he had the mortification to perceive that it was beyond his power to prevent him from carrying it into execution. On each hand he was perplexed with insurmountable difficulties. The fortifications of the Spanish army were already so complete, that he could not attack them with the smallest hopes of success. If he should remain where he was, Lagny would certainly be lost, and thereby a passage to Paris opened on the other side of the river; and if he should transport his army, in order to save Lagny, the duke would then be at liberty to march directly by the road on this side to the relief of the besieged.

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THERE was no other expedient in his power, but, while he remained in his present situation, to send reinforcements from time to time to the garrison of Lagny.

THE duke of Parma mean while pushed forward the siege of that place with the utmost celerity and vigour; having, as already mentioned, planted a battery on this side of the river, he opened it next morning, and soon laid a great part of the wall in ruins. The garrison however still believed themselves to be secure, as the river was between them and the enemy; but the duke had thrown a bridge of boats over it some miles above the town, and had already transported several thousands of his bravest troops. These troops were ready to mount the breach as soon as it was made practicable. In the first assault they were repulsed with great bravery by the garrison, but an error in military discipline, committed by La-fin, the governor, quickly decided the fate of Lagny. Instead of relieving those who had sustained the first assault, by changing them file by file, according to an established rule in the defence

He takes
Lagny.

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defence of places, he attempted to do it all at once, and thereby threw his men into confusion. This blunder was perceived by the assailants, who returned instantly to the charge with redoubled fury, and after taking La-fin himself prisoner, put most of the garrison to the sword, while the king stood a sorrowful spectator of the loss of the place, and the slaughter of his men.

Relief of
Paris.

AFTER the taking of Lagny, no other obstacle remained to prevent the Spaniards from approaching Paris on that side of the river, but the garrisons at the bridges of St. Maur and Charenton. These were easily overcome, and the convoys with provisions advanced without molestation to the gates of the city. The joy of the Parisians on this occasion may be more easily imagined than described; they poured forth in multitudes to receive that food of which they stood so much in need, and every tongue celebrated in the highest strains the praises of their deliverer.

Error of the
French monarch.

No person admired more that dexterity by which the duke of Parma had accomplished his design, than the king himself; but his generous spirit was severely mortified, and he had the greater reason for the chagrin which he felt on this occasion; because, if, instead of encamping his army at Chelles, he had followed the counsel of the wise La Noue, and advanced as far as Claye, Lagny might have been saved, and the Spanish army so long retarded, that the Parisians must have thrown themselves upon his mercy.

HENRY's uneasiness was greatly augmented when he considered, that at present it was impossible for him by any bold decisive stroke to retrieve his error. He knew it to be vain to entertain the hopes of forcing the duke of Parma, now when the end of his expedition was accomplished, to expose his troops

troops to the risk of a battle. His own army was greatly weakened by sickness, and the fatigues of a long campaign. All the country round being laid waste, he began to feel a scarcity of provisions; his exchequer was exhausted, and many of his nobility and gentry, who served at their own expence, having no farther expectations this season of either subduing Paris, or compelling the enemy to engage, were impatient to depart. Determined by these motives, he retired to St Dennis, and having disbanded the greatest part of his forces, he sent the nobility to provide for the security of the several provinces in which their interest lay, retaining only a flying army of his best troops, with which he intended during the winter to check the progress of the enemy.

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He disbands
his army.

THIS little army was not so formidable as to prevent the duke of Parma from undertaking whatever enterprize he should incline. At the desire of Mayenne, and the other heads of the league, he laid siege to Corbeil; and notwithstanding the most obstinate resistance, he took it by assault, but not till he had spent many days in the siege, and lost a great number of men.

Siege of
Corbeil.

BEING desirous to preserve in his own hands an acquisition which had cost him so dear, he proposed to the leaders of the league to put in Corbeil a garrison of his Walloon or Italian forces. By this proposal perhaps he meant only to make trial of their disposition towards the catholic king; or, considering how averse he himself had ever been from his present expedition, he intended to make Philip sensible of the difficulty of deriving any substantial advantage from taking so deep an interest in the affairs of France.

WHATEVER was his motive, Mayenne, and the other leaders, declined consenting to his proposal, and in their refusal gave him a clear discovery

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of their jealousy and suspicion. This discovery confirmed him in his opinion, that matters were far from being ripe for the execution of Philip's designs, and that probably he should never be able to accomplish them by any other means than by protracting the war, till the strength and patience of the contending parties were exhausted. This plan had, as mentioned above, been recommended to Philip by the duke himself; and conformably to it, he resolved, since neither party was in immediate danger of being overpowered, to return to the Netherlands. Other motives concurred in determining him to form this resolution; the inclemency of the season, the sickness of his army, the want of money, and a scarcity of provisions; which last was so great, as made it necessary for him sometimes to suffer his troops to plunder the inhabitants, although he foresaw that his granting this permission must not only prove prejudicial to his discipline, but contribute likewise to alienate the affections of the people, and thereby to obstruct his master's views.

THE catholic leaders, who had expected that he would have remained in France till the king was totally subdued, laboured with much importunity to divert him from his purpose; but all their arguments were ineffectual. The state of affairs in the Netherlands, he informed them, rendered his return indispensably necessary, but he would send them money, and leave such a number of troops as would enable them to prosecute the war. Neither the money^d nor troops^e which he promised were answerable to the sanguine expectations which they had formed. They saw that Philip, notwithstanding the seeming zeal with which he had espoused

^d Thirty thousand ducats.

^e Between five and six thousand.

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espoused their cause, was surely actuated by some private motive of ambition ; that there was nothing farther from his intention than to bring the war to a conclusion, and that he would never contribute effectually to their gaining a victory over their enemies, unless he himself were to reap the fruits of it. They found it necessary however to conceal their suspicions, and to accept of the scanty supply of money and troops which the duke had offered. Farnese in the mean time was preparing for his march ; and, as he could not doubt that Henry would give him all the annoyance in his power, he employed the same precautions as he had done formerly when he left the Netherlands. Having drawn up his army in four divisions, he marched always in the order of battle : the country through which he passed was diligently reconnoitred by the light horse, and his camp was every evening secured by strong intrenchments.

NOTWITHSTANDING these precautions, the king was determined not to suffer him to return unmolested. With this intention he had brought a select body of troops to Compeigne, near the borders of Picardy, and he set out with them from that place, as soon as he got information of the enemy's route, inflamed with the desire of taking vengeance for the injuries he had received. Henry had full scope in the present scene of action for his wonted bravery and vigilance, nor did he suffer any opportunity to escape of exerting these qualities with signal damage to the enemy. Hovering perpetually round them, he attacked them sometimes in the front, when they least expected it, sometimes in the flank, and sometimes in the rear, giving them no respite night or day, and filling their minds with continual apprehensions and alarms.

The duke
returns to
the Nether-
lands.

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No general could have made greater efforts with so small a force ; and if the Spaniards had been commanded by a general less distinguished than the duke of Parma for prudence and circumspection, it is impossible, considering the length of their march, the badness of the roads, and the season of the year, but they must have been often thrown into confusion, and the greater part of them destroyed. But the duke's vigilance was not inferior to the activity of the king ; while he was perpetually on his guard, and ever ready to assist whatever part of his army was attacked, he suffered no provocation to divert him from the prosecution of his march ; and at last he brought his troops, though not without considerable loss, yet in good order, into the province of Hainault^f.

P A R T II.

Affairs of
the Low
Countries.

THE duke of Parma, on his return to the Netherlands, found that all the unhappy consequences which he foretold had arisen from his absence. Having drained his finances by the French expedition, many of the troops left in the Low Countries had mutinied on account of their want of pay. The forces of the confederated states had over-run the fertile provinces of Brabant and Flanders ; and prince Maurice having made himself master of a great number of the smaller towns upon the frontier, had paved the way for future conquests.

THESE misfortunes gave the duke of Parma the greater uneasiness, as he had little prospect of being able soon either to retrieve his losses, or to make

^f D'Avila, lib. xi. Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. v. Thuanus, lib. xcix. sect. vi. and vii.

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make reprisals on the enemy. Finding by his instructions from the court of Spain, that Philip was as much intoxicated as ever with his ambitious views on France, he was obliged to station the greatest part of his troops in the province of Artois and Hainault, where they might be ready to march, if necessary, to the assistance of the league. And thus several of the most important towns, which lay next to the revolted provinces, being badly furnished with garrisons to defend them, were exposed an easy prey to the enemy. The confederates were too sagacious not to discern the advantage which was thus presented to them: whereas they had, till lately, been satisfied with defending their frontier, which they had done with much anxiety, and often without success; they now took courage from the distractions in which Philip's preposterous ambition had involved him, and resolved to exert themselves with vigour in carrying on an offensive war.

THE year 1591 had just begun, when colonel Norris led out the garrison of Ostend, which had been reinforced by troops from England; and having taken the fort of Blakemberg, between Ostend and Sluys, he laid a great part of Flanders open to his incursions. Soon afterwards another party of the forces of the States surprised the forts of Turnhout and Westerlo, in Brabant. But these conquests were inconsiderable when compared with those of prince Maurice, who having put his troops in motion, as early as the season would permit, opened the campaign with the siege of Zutphen, and soon compelled the garrison to surrender.

Prince Maurice subdued.

Zutphen;

FROM this place he led his army against Deventer, a town of still greater importance than Zutphen. Deventer had been, as above related, betrayed to the Spaniards by Sir William Stanly; and

and Deventer.

10th June.

and Maurice was earnestly solicited to undertake the siege of it, at this time, by colonel Vere, who was fired with the generous ambition of wiping out the reproach which Stanly's treachery had brought upon his countrymen. Vere displayed in this siege all that bravery and conduct, for which he is so highly celebrated by the cotemporary historians; and next to Maurice, who conducted the attack with consummate prudence, he principally contributed to the reduction of the place. It was vigorously defended by the count de Berg, cousin-german to the prince; but the count being grievously wounded, and the wall on that side where Vere commanded laid in ruins, the garrison capitulated in a few days after opening the trenches, and the inhabitants returned under obedience to the States^g.

THE duke of Parma in the mean time laid siege to the fort of Knotzenberg, which Maurice had built in the end of the preceding year. By this fort, the confederates commanded the navigation of the river, and gave such annoyance to Nimeguen, as made the duke extremely uneasy about the fate of that important city. In order to conceal his design, he directed his march first towards the fort of Schenck. But Maurice was not deceived by this feint, and had taken care to strengthen the garrison of Knotzenberg with an addition of some chosen troops.

He defeats
the Spanish
horse.

THE duke therefore met with the most vigorous resistance, and lost a great number of his men; still, however, he persisted in the siege. Maurice, dreading his success, relinquished a scheme which he had formed for the reduction of Groningen, and having passed the Waal, he pitched his camp within sight of the enemy. As he did not possess

suf-

^g Vide Bentivoglio, p. 350. Grotius, p. 145. Meteren, p. 530.

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sufficient force to attack their lines, he intended only to encourage the garrison by his presence, or to straiten the duke's quarters, and to intercept his convoys. Many skirmishes passed with various success, till Maurice at length found an opportunity of putting in practice the following stratagem: Having planted an ambush of his bravest troops, he marched up to the enemy's camp, attended by count Solmes and colonel Vere, at the head of some companies of horse. The duke less circumspect and cautious on this occasion than usual, sent out ten companies of Spanish and Italian horse to attack him. A fierce rencounter ensued. Agreeably to orders, the prince's troops soon turned their backs and fled. The royalists pursued with ardour, till they had passed a narrow defile and a bridge, when Maurice returning suddenly to the charge, and the soldiers in ambush pouring in upon them from both sides, their return to the camp was intercepted, and almost all of them were put to the sword or taken prisoners.

THIS disaster afflicted the duke of Parma in the most sensible manner; a great number of the officers who fell were his countrymen, many of whom were persons of rank, in whose fortune he was particularly interested. He perceived that, if he remained in his present situation, he must find it extremely difficult, from the diminution of his cavalry, to supply his army with provisions, and he had not as yet made any considerable progress in the siege.

HE would still however have prosecuted his enterprize, if he had not been obliged to desist from it by orders which he received from Philip, to act only on the defensive in the Netherlands, and to spare his troops as much as possible for another expedition

pedition into France. Maurice hoped to have gained some advantage over Farnese in his retreat from Knotzenberg ; but both in this, and in his passage over the Waal, such wise precautions were employed, as rendered it impossible for the prince to annoy him ; while they filled that young hero with the highest admiration of the duke of Parma's skill, and furnished him with important lessons in the military art, which he put in practice on many occasions afterwards with signal glory and success.

The reduction of
Hulst,

HAVING passed the river, and put his troops in safety, the duke ordered new levies to be made in Germany, Burgundy, and the southern provinces of the Netherlands ; after which, he went, on account of his indisposition, to drink the waters at Spa. He had no sooner set out, than prince Maurice having embarked four thousand foot and six hundred horse, made a sudden descent on that part of Flanders called the county of Waes, and invested the town of Hulst. Mondragone, the governor of Antwerp, lost no time in drawing together such forces as were stationed in the neighbouring places, with an intention to raise the siege. But Maurice having pierced the dykes, had laid the country under water, and rendered it impossible for Mondragone to approach. Agreeably to the intelligence which had induced the prince to engage in his present enterprize, the garrison of Hulst was weak, and they were badly furnished both with provisions and military stores. Their defence therefore was spiritless and feeble, and they soon agreed to a surrender.

and Nime-
guen.

FROM Hulst, Maurice returned unexpectedly to Knotzenberg ; and as there was no Spanish army near, he threw a bridge over the Waal, and laid siege to Nimeguen. The garrison, consisting of Germans and Walloons, made several sallies to retard his approach ;

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approach; and, if they had been seconded by the townsmen, the reduction of a place of so great extent and strength as Nimeguen, must have detained him long. But he had for some time past held a secret correspondence with some of the principal inhabitants, and the people in general were extremely disaffected to the Spanish government. They took courage now, when Maurice was at hand to support them, and having risen tumultuously, required the garrison, in the most peremptory manner, to put an end to their calamities by a surrender of the town. The garrison, conscious of their inability to resist both the citizens and the enemy, complied with their request; and Maurice was received by them rather as their deliver from slavery, than as a conqueror by whose arms they had been subdued. They were admitted to the same privileges as the other towns of the confederacy; and although the administration was put into the hands of the protestants, yet no punishment was inflicted on any of the catholics, by whom the city had been kept so long under the Spanish government.

AFTER this important acquisition, Maurice set out for the Hague, and received there the most flattering testimonies of gratitude, attachment, and respect. The prudence with which his enterprises had been concerted, and the celerity and vigour with which he had carried them into execution, filled all Europe with his renown, and gave his countrymen the most sanguine hopes of future prosperity and success.

THEIR condition was extremely different at this period from what it had ever been since the confederacy had been formed: till lately they had experienced an uninterrupted course of calamities; they had been perpetually disturbed with intestine broils, and

State of the
confederacy.

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and had lived under continual anxiety, occasioned partly by the neighbourhood of their active enterprising enemy, and partly by the perfidious designs of those whom they had intrusted with the reins of government. But their domestic dissensions were now composed; the enemy was removed to a greater distance, and their frontier was formed either by towns strongly fortified, or by navigable rivers, in which they could avail themselves of the superiority of their naval force. They were no longer disquieted by suspicions of the fidelity of their governors, and the loss which they had suffered by the death of the prince of Orange, was compensated by the extraordinary merit of his son.

French affairs.

BUT there was nothing which contributed so much to inspire them with their present hopes, as their knowledge of Philip's attention being still as much engrossed as ever with the affairs of France. In prosecution of his plan for acquiring the sovereignty of that kingdom, by fomenting the war, he had, after the duke of Parma raised the siege of Paris, afforded the leaders of the league only such assistance as was necessary to save them from being overwhelmed. Their power was at this time exceedingly reduced, while that of the king had received a proportional augmentation. By his bravery and good conduct, joined to his clemency and moderation, Henry had allured great numbers of his rebellious subjects to their duty; and had, at the same time, engaged the protestants in Germany, and the queen of England, to interest themselves more deeply than ever in his cause. For several months past he had been absolute master of the field, and he had lately begun the siege of Rouen, with an army amounting nearly to thirty thousand horse and foot. Both the town and garrison were commanded by the Sieur de Villars, who displayed the highest degree of intrepidity, vigilance, and skill in the defence. But there was
little

little probability of his being able to defend it long against so powerful an army, whose operations were conducted by so great a master in the art of war.

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THE duke de Mayenne, and other catholic leaders, dreaded, that the reduction of so important a place as Rouen would prove fatal to their party, and they had exerted themselves strenuously to relieve it; but having no army, with which they could venture to enter the lists with the king, they had recourse as formerly to Philip, and spared no pains to convince him, that, if he did not speedily interpose, Rouen, and all the other towns in their possession must, ere long submit to the king's victorious arms. They were seconded in their application by the Spanish ministers in France; and in consequence of instructions sent from Madrid to the duke of Parma, that general, after his return from Spa, had been entirely occupied in preparing to lead his army a second time to the assistance of the league.

Siege of
Rouen.

His preparations were finished about the middle of December, and on the 21st of that month began his march, taking the same precautions as in his former expedition. He was joined by the duke de Mayenne in the Province of Picardy, and his army, after the reinforcement brought him by the duke, amounted to five and twenty thousand foot and six thousand horse.

Duke of
Parma's second
expedition into
France.

As in order to preserve his troops fresh and vigorous, he marched only a few miles each day, it was near the end of January before he reached the province of Normandy. At that time the siege of Rouen was far advanced, and the garrison was reduced to the last extremity. When the king therefore heard of the duke of Parma's approach, he could not resolve to relinquish his enterprise; but

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but he left his infantry to prosecute the siege, and advanced towards the duke with his cavalry, in hopes that, by harassing and retarding him on his march, the garrison would be obliged to capitulate before he could arrive.

Danger of
Henry at
Aumale.

By his vigilance, intrepidity and quick discernment, Henry was admirably fitted for the bold and dangerous enterprize in which he was now engaged ; but his impetuous courage was not always under the government of prudence, and betrayed him sometimes into rash and desperate attempts, more becoming an officer of inferior rank, than a general or a king. Of this he gave a striking proof in his conduct on the present occasion. Having advanced before the rest of the cavalry with three or four hundred horse, he met unexpectedly, near the town of Aumale, with the forerunners of the duke of Parma's army, and he repulsed them with little difficulty ; but although the whole Spanish army was in sight, he would not retire till he had taken a view of the order of their march, nor even after he saw the duke's light horse advancing towards him. With these likewise he encountered, and fought long and desperately, till many of his troops had fallen by his side, and he himself was wounded. Had not the duke of Parma suspected an ambuscade, he might easily have cut off the king's retreat. He was urged by Mayenne to send forward more troops for that purpose ; but he refused to comply with the duke's request ; and when he was afterwards reminded of the opportunity which he had lost, he replied, that he could not reproach himself for his conduct, as he supposed that, in the king of Navarre, he had a great general to contend with, and not merely the captain of a troop of horse.

HENRY was no sooner able, after his wound, to get on horseback, than he resumed his first design of annoying the enemy on their march ; and this he did with more circumspection than before, but

but with such indefatigable vigour and activity, as kept the duke of Parma in perpetual alarms. Several warm rencounters passed, in which the success was various. The duke's vigilance, and the perfect discipline which he maintained, preserved his army from sustaining any great calamity. His march however was considerably retarded, and there was much reason to apprehend, that the besieged would be compelled to surrender before he could advance to their relief.

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NOTHING less than the intrepidity and skill of Villars could have protracted the siege to so great a length. This brave man, far from having any thoughts of capitulating, aspired to the glory of raising the siege without the assistance of the Spaniards. With this view he resolved to take advantage of the absence of the king, and to exert at once his whole force in an attack on the besiegers. Never was attack conducted with more intrepidity and vigour. Great numbers of the royalists were put to the sword; the marshal de Biron, their commander in chief, was wounded; their trenches were filled up; many of their cannon were spiked, or buried in the ditch; and their stores of provision and ammunition were either carried into the town or destroyed. Villars was at last repulsed, and obliged to retire within the walls; but not till the enemy had suffered so much loss by the slaughter which he committed, and the destruction of their works and stores, that he expected to be able to defend the town for several months longer, if his garrison were reinforced.

Spirited conduct of Villars.

Of this happy change in his situation, Villars gave immediate notice to the duke of Parma, and advised him to turn his arms to some other quarter, where they might be employed with greater advantage to the common cause. It was suspected, that vanity had considerable influence in prompting Villars

Villars to give this advice. The duke was within two days march of Rouen when he received it, and he immediately called a council of war to consider of what was proper to be done.

He was himself of opinion, that he ought still to pursue his march, in order to attack the enemy before they had recovered from their confusion; and he observed, that if he should only send a reinforcement to the garrison, as the governor had desired, the king of Navarre would instantly renew the operations of the siege, and probably exert himself with greater vigour than before. But the duke de Mayenne and the other French nobility, less bold on this occasion than the duke of Parma, represented, that notwithstanding the disaster which had befallen the royalists, it would be extremely dangerous to attack them in their intrenchments whilst their cavalry were so numerous; that when the nobility who served without pay, and were already impatient under the length of the siege, and the rigour of the season, saw that there was no prospect of a battle, they would leave the camp, and retire to their respective homes; that the duke might then attack the king with the highest probability of success; and that till then the troops might either be employed in some other enterprise, or conducted to winter quarters, whence they might issue forth fresh and vigorous, when a more advantageous season for action should arrive. Whether Mayenne spoke from conviction on this occasion, or from his dread of the duke of Parma's acquiring too great a superiority over the king, is doubtful. Farnese was not entirely satisfied with his reasoning, and could not approve of a resolution to neglect one favourable opportunity, on account of the uncertain expectation of another. But as the proposal was perfectly consistent with his plan of protracting the war, he complied with it; and having sent eight hundred select

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select troops to reinforce the garrison of Rouen, he led his army back to Picardy, and invested the town of St. Esprit de Rue.

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HE had no sooner set out, than the king applied himself with the utmost diligence to the prosecution of the siege of Rouen ; and as he received at this time a seasonable supply of cannon and ammunition from the States of Holland, he was enabled to carry on his operations with greater success than ever.

IN a few weeks the garrison was again reduced to the most critical situation, and Villars, notwithstanding the confidence, of which he had lately given so strong a proof, was obliged to let the duke of Parma know, that if he did not return to his relief before the twentieth of April, he would find it necessary to give up the town. Mayenne was now as solicitous to persuade the duke of Parma to lead his army against the king, as he had been formerly reluctant and averse. And the duke more readily yielded to his desire, as certain intelligence had been received, that, agreeably to Mayenne's prediction, the cavalry in the king's army did not at this time amount to more than the half of their former number. Having drawn off his troops from St. Esprit de Rue, he set out without delay for Rouen, and proceeded with so great expedition, that he performed the same march in six days, which had formerly cost him twenty.

The siege of
Rouen raised.

THE king was equally disappointed and surprised when he heard of his approach. He dreaded the danger to which his army would be exposed, if he remained in his present situation, between so brave a garrison on the one hand, and the Spanish army on the other ; and he would have gone to meet the duke of Parma at a distance from the town ; but finding, upon an accurate review, of his troops, that they were greatly inferior in number to the enemy, he raised the siege, after it had lasted

for April 20.

for five months, and retired to Pont de l'Arche, with a resolution to wait there for the return of his nobility. The duke of Parma in the mean time advanced in battle array, and entered Rouen in a kind of triumph. From Rouen he led his army by the advice of Mayenne, and the other leaders of the league, against Caudebec; which it was thought necessary to reduce, before the deliverance of Rouen could be deemed complete.

Duke of
Parma
wounded at
Caudebec.

IN taking a review of the fortifications, and marking the ground for batteries, which he did, as on other occasions, with his own hand, he received a wound by a musket-ball, which entered his arm a little below the elbow, and pierced downward till it lodged in his wrist. Without any change in his voice or countenance, he continued to give his orders as before, nor could his son and the other by-standers persuade him to retire till he had instructed them fully in his designs. In order to discover the course of the ball, his surgeon found it necessary to make three different incisions; and the pain occasioned by these and the wound brought on a fever, which confined him to his bed for several days. This accident had almost proved fatal to his army and to the league. The siege of Caudebec was conducted agreeably to his direction, and was soon brought to a conclusion; but in undertaking this siege, the duke had committed the only considerable blunder which we meet with in the history of his life. Caudebec lies in the peninsula of Caux, which is formed by the Seine on the west, and the sea and the river d'Eu, or Bresle, on the north and east. As the king, by possessing the towns of Eu, Arques, and Dieppe, commanded the entrance into Caux from the east, it was impossible for the army of the league to get out of it, but either by crossing the Seine, or returning southward the same road by which they had come,

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had entered the peninsula. In this way they might have escaped, if they had attempted it in time; and perhaps they would have done so, had it not been judged necessary for the general's recovery, that he should remain for several days at Caudbec.

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THE king quickly perceived the advantage which was presented to him, and exerted himself with ardour to improve it. Having immediately after he had raised the siege of Rouen, dispatched messengers to summon his nobility to return to his camp, they had obeyed his summons with their wonted alacrity; and in the space of a few days, his army was augmented to seventeen thousand foot, and between seven and eight thousand horse. With this army he left Pont de L'Arche on the 30th of April, and arrived on the same day within sight of the enemy, who had encamped at Yvetot, which lies at the distance of three or four miles from Caudbec.

The Spanish
army block-
ed up in
Caux.

HENRY's first care was to fortify his camp in such a manner, that it might not be in the power of the enemy to compel him to engage; and his next, to make himself master of all the defiles through which they might attempt to force their passage. Many hot rencounters happened, in which both parties gave conspicuous proofs of prowess and intrepidity. The royalists were frequently repulsed from their stations, and much blood was spilt. But at last they accomplished their design, and hemmed in the enemy so closely, that it was no longer practicable for them to approach to the outlet from the peninsula. In this situation they remained a fortnight. Their stock of provisions was almost spent, and Henry began to indulge the flattering hope, that in a few days they would lay down their arms.

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NOTHING

NOTHING but the bold inventive genius of the duke of Parma could have saved them from this disgrace: he had erred when he had entered the peninsula, while so vigilant an enemy as Henry was so near. Neither the importunity of the chiefs of the league, nor his ignorance of the country, nor the hopes of finishing his enterprize before the king could arrive, are entirely sufficient to justify his conduct. But he now fully atoned for his imprudence in exposing his troops to so great a risk, by the extraordinary capacity and vigour which he exerted in their deliverance.

As soon as he had recovered from the distress occasioned by his wound, and taken a view of the position and strength of the enemy, he perceived that it would be in vain to attempt to force their lines; and consequently that, there was no other way by which he could save his army from captivity or ruin, but by transporting it over the river. To this expedient he resolved to have recourse, and he communicated his design to the duke de Mayenne, and some others of his most experienced officers, who all pronounced it to be impracticable. They knew how difficult it was to pass even the most inconsiderable river in sight of an enemy, and they could not conceive it possible for an army so much encumbered with artillery and baggage, to pass so broad a river as the Seine at Caudbec, when not only a powerful enemy, so vigilant as the king, but the Dutch ships of war likewise, were prepared to obstruct their passage.

THE duke was fully sensible of all the difficulties with which his enterprize must be attended, but as the urgent necessity of his situation would not suffer him to relinquish it, he persisted in his resolution of attempting to carry it into execution.

HAVING

HAVING first cleared the river of the Dutch ships, by planting batteries along the banks, he ordered the Sieur de Villars to hold all the boats and barks at Rouen in readiness and to prepare a number of rafts of strong beams fit for transporting the artillery. After this, taking advantage of a thick mist, on the 16th of May, he sent out his cavalry by day-break, as if he intended an attack, and while the enemy were thus amused, he drew off his infantry from Yvetot to Caudbec. The cavalry followed; and as soon as they had retired, the king advanced with all his forces, having no suspicion of the duke's design, and wondering that he should have chosen to move his camp to a situation in which it was more confined and straitened than before. Henry still thought of nothing but blocking up the passages, and fortifying his camp so as not to be obliged to accept of battle.

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WHILE the king was thus occupied, the duke employed a great number of pioneers in raising two forts, one on each side of the river, directly opposite to each other, which he planted with cannon, and lined with musketeers. To prevent the king from taking the alarm, he maintained all the same appearances as formerly, of a design to enlarge his quarters, and frequent skirmishes were fought.

AT last every thing necessary being prepared, the rafts and the boats (of which there was a great number at Rouen employed in the river trade) fell down with the ebbing tide, in the evening of the 20th of May; and on the same night, the greatest part of the troops, artillery, and baggage was transported. The king perceiving early next morning a change in the appearance of the enemy's camp, sent the baron de Biron to reconnoitre it. The baron returned immediately at full gallop, calling out, that the Spaniards were pass-

ing the river. Henry set out without delay, at the head of his cavalry. When he came in fight he had the mortification to observe, that only two or three thousand of the Spaniards remained on this side, and that they were so skilfully defended by the fort, that he could not approach them without sacrificing the lives of many of his troops. He then planted his artillery on a hill which commanded the passage, and the Dutch ships came up the river from Quillebeuf; but before the cannon were ready to fire, and before the Dutch were near enough to do execution, the rear of the Spaniards, conducted with much prudence by prince Rannucio, the duke of Parma's son, had landed safe on the other side, and set the boats on fire.

NEITHER the king nor any of the French nobility had ever suspected that such a retreat was possible; and this circumstance, joined to the nature of the ground near Caudbec, which concealed the duke of Parma's operations, contributed not a little to the fortunate issue of his enterprize. Henry had for several days entertained the most sanguine hopes of gaining a decisive victory, which would probably have given him immediate possession of his kingdom; and his mortification now was in proportion to the confidence of his former expectations: it was the more sensible and galling, as his infantry was so much exhausted by the hardships of a tedious winter's campaign, that it was impossible for him at present either to pursue the enemy, or to resume the siege of Rouen. The duke de Mayenne entered this city with a part of the forces, and the duke of Parma directed his march towards the Netherlands, where he arrived in a few weeks without receiving any molestation by the way ^h.

WHILE

^h D'Avila, lib. xiii. Bentivoglio, part ii. lib. vi. and Thuanus, lib. ciii.

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WHILE Philip thus kept alive the flames of war in France, he had the good fortune to preserve his Spanish dominions in a state of undisturbed tranquillity; and as a kingdom in this situation furnishes few materials for history, hardly any transaction passed in Spain during several years preceding the present period that deserves to be recorded; but in the course of this year an affair happened which, while it marks the character, and shews the secret life of Philip, was attended with the most serious consequences.

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1592.
History of
Antonio Pe-
rez.

HAVING been engaged in a love intrigue with Anna Mendoza, princess of Eboliⁱ, he had committed the conduct of it to his secretary Antonio Perez, who having frequent opportunities of conversing with that princess, had become no less enamoured of her than the king; and it was generally believed that she had made him a full return to the passion which her beauty had inspired. At the time when Antonio's correspondence with the princess was much talked of, Escovedo, the friend and confidant of Don John of Austria, had arrived from the Netherlands, to solicit the king for the return of the Italian and Spanish forces; and finding the secretary averse from Don John's designs, he resolved to take vengeance on him, by making a discovery to the king of what was reported of Antonio's familiarity with the princess of Eboli. Philip readily believed this intelligence, and conceived an implacable resentment against the secretary; but he was animated at the same time with hatred no less implacable towards Escovedo; who, he believed, had fomented Don John's ambition; and would sooner or later engage that prince in some desperate enterprise inconsistent with his allegiance.

ⁱ The wife of Ruy Gomez de Silva.

legiance. Philip resolved to employ one of these men as the instrument of his vengeance against the other, and gave a private order to Perez to have Escovedo assassinated. This order was executed without delay, and soon afterwards a prosecution was begun against the murderer, with Philip's permission, by the widow and children of Escovedo. Philip intended by this measure to remove all suspicions of being accessory to the murder. But dreading that Perez might, for his own exculpation, make a full discovery, he wrote him several letters with his own hand, requiring that he would conceal the order which had been given him, and assuring him, that a stop should soon be put to the prosecution. It was stopped accordingly; and although Perez was forbid to come to court himself, he was allowed for some years to transact the several branches of public business which had been intrusted to him, by his deputies or clerks. But no time could assuage the king's resentment: after six years he commanded him to be tried for malversation in the discharge of his Office, and having ordered a fine of thirty thousand ducats to be imposed on him, he threw him into prison, and loaded him with chains. Perez was offered his liberty, on condition that he should give up all the king's letters relative to the murder of Escovedo. He delivered some of them, and was released; but Philip was no sooner in possession of the letters, than a new process on account of the murder was commenced. Perez was again thrown into prison, and put to the torture; and he now perceived, that nothing less than his death was intended. With the assistance of his wife and friends he escaped, and fled to Arragon, his native country, where he expected to avail himself of the rights and privileges of the Arragonians. Philip no sooner heard of his escape, than he dispatched certain officers after him, who overtook him in the town of Calataiude; and
having

having forced him from a monastery, where he had taken refuge, conducted him to Saragossa. When he arrived in that city, he appealed to the Justiza, to whom, according to a fundamental law of the constitution, an appeal was competent from every other judge whether civil or ecclesiastical.

By the Justiza Perez was lodged in the state prison, called the Manifestation, to remain there till his cause should be tried. But although no person could legally enter this prison, without the special permission of the Justiza, the marquis of Almenar, the king's attorney for Arragon, broke into it with a body of armed men, and carried off Perez to the prison of the inquisition. The people, who had ever been accustomed to hold the person and authority of the Justiza in the highest veneration, were inflamed with rage at this indignity, and having risen tumultuously, they rescued Perez from the inquisitors, surrounded the marquis of Almenar, and after reviling him as traitor to the liberty of his country, maltreated him in such a manner that he died soon afterwards of his wounds.

PEREZ was again lodged in the prison of state, and remained there for several months, during which time the governor, or viceroy, ordered thirteen of the principal lawyers of Saragossa, to examine whether the cause belonged more properly to the Justiza, or to the court of inquisition. After long deliberation they declared, that it would be a violation of the liberties of Arragon, if Perez were tried by any other judge than the Justiza; but afterwards, being either corrupted or intimidated, they reversed this sentence, under the pretence of the prisoner's having held a secret correspondence with the king of France, a heretic, and pronounced that it belonged to the inquisition to take cognizance of his cause.

THE

THE Justiza paid no regard to this opinion of the lawyers, but persisted in defending the privileges of his office, and in refusing to deliver up the prisoner. The viceroy had recourse to force; and having drawn together a great number of the familiars of the inquisition, he broke open the state prison, loaded Perez with chains, and was carrying him off in a sort of triumph, when the people rose a second time, and set him at liberty. He immediately left the town, and made his escape into France, where he gave useful information to the king with regard to the designs and measures of the court of Spain.

PHILIP in the mean time resolved not to neglect the opportunity which this sedition of the Arragonians afforded him, to shew how little he regarded those rights and privileges of which they had shewn themselves so tenacious. Having formed an army of the troops which were quartered in different parts of Castile, he gave the command of it to Alphonso Vargas, with instructions to march to Saragossa with the utmost expedition; and to prevent the Arragonians from preparing for resistance, he gave out that this army was intended to assist the catholics in France. The Arragonians however having received certain intelligence of his design, began to prepare for their defence. Lanusa, the Justiza, having convened the principal inhabitants, and read to them a fundamental law of their constitution, by which it is declared, that they have a right to oppose by force the entrance of foreign troops into Arragon, even though the king himself should lead them, it was decreed with unanimous consent, that conformably to this law they should take up arms on the present occasion, to prevent the entrance of the Castilians under Vargas.

INTIMATION

INTIMATION of this decree was sent to the other cities of the province, and the inhabitants of Saragossa repaired in great numbers to the standard of liberty that was erected. But they had no leader of sufficient capacity to conduct them, and there was no time for the people in other places to come to their assistance. Vargas having arrived much sooner than they expected, they were overwhelmed with terror, and threw down their arms.

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VARGAS entered the city without opposition, and cast such of their leaders as had not made their escape into prison. Among these were the duke de Villa Hermosa, the count of Aranda, and the Justiza. The two first he sent prisoners to Madrid, but he put the Justiza publicly to death without either trial or sentence, and then confiscated his effects, and levelled his houses with the ground; ordering proclamation to be made in the city, that such would be the punishment of all those who, like Lanusa, should adventure to dispute the authority of the king.

The Justiza
of Arragon
put to death.

THE people heard this insulting proclamation with unspeakable grief and indignation; but they were obliged to lament in secret the ruin of those invaluable rights which they were unable to defend. The palace of the inquisition was fortified, that it might serve the purpose of a citadel; and a strong body of Castilian troops were quartered there and in the town, where they remained till the minds of the citizens were thoroughly subdued. Philip thought it unnecessary to abolish formally their constitution of government, as he had given them sufficient proof how insignificant they would find it, if they should ever trust to it as a barrier against the encroachments of the regal power.

WHILE this transaction passed in Spain, the duke of Parma had returned from France to the Netherlands, and from thence the bad state of his health

Sickness of
the duke of
Parma.

health had made it necessary for him to go once more to drink the waters at Spa. In the time of his French expedition, many of the troops which he had left behind him had mutinied ; and on his return from Spa, he had the mortification to find, that prince Maurice had subdued the two important towns of Steenwich and Coverden, although the former of these places had been fortified in the strongest manner, and was defended by a brave and determined garrison of one thousand six hundred men.

THE duke's chagrin at these events, contributed to quicken the progress of his disease, which having baffled the power of medicine, had now reduced him so low, that finding himself unable to fulfil the duties of his office, he had applied to the king for liberty to retire.

His death,

BUT Philip believing that no other person was so able to bring his schemes in France to the desired issue, refused to grant his request ; and when he signified his refusal, sent him instructions to return as soon as possible to the assistance of the League. The duke would not desert a station which he had filled with so much honour, and resolved to struggle with his distemper to the last. Having by new levies supplied some of the vacancies in his army, he went, on the 29th of October, to Arras, and there applied with his wonted assiduity to hasten the necessary preparations for his expedition. The strength of his mind counterbalanced for several weeks the weakness of his body. From the vigour which he displayed, those about him conceived hopes that his death was still at a considerable distance. But on the 3d of December, immediately after signing some dispatches which had been prepared for his subscription, he expired in the forty-seventh

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seventh year of his age, and the fourteenth of his government of the Netherlands.

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IN this manner died Alexander Farnese, duke of Parma, who claims our admiration, no less for his political wisdom and sagacity, than on account of those more splendid military talents which have procured him such distinguished renown. It was by his prudence, moderation, and address, more than by the force of arms, that he re-united so great a part of the Netherlands to the Spanish monarchy; and if Philip had paid the same regard to his opinion on all occasions, which he did on some, it is probable that the United Provinces would have been compelled to return to their allegiance. England might in that case have been subdued, and France might have been swallowed up by the exorbitant power of Spain. Though it was happy for Europe that Philip, blinded by flattery and ambition, refused to listen to the counsels that were offered him, yet we must admire that superior sagacity and penetration by which they were suggested.

THE duke of Parma in his youth gave no indications of those extraordinary qualities with which nature had endowed him, and men were even disposed to think unfavourably of his understanding; but in the war with the Turks, in which he served under John of Austria, the flame of his genius broke forth, and burnt afterwards through the whole of his life with unabating splendor. His person was graceful, his eyes lively and penetrating, his manners courteous, his address insinuating, and his temper generous and humane.

HIS vices, says a respectable Dutch writer^k, were those of the age in which he lived, or of the court

^k Grotius.

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court in which he had been educated ; but what these vices were, neither this, nor any other historian has informed us. He appears not to have possessed that winning simplicity of manners, that perfect ingenuity and candour, by which his great rival for military fame, the French monarch, was so eminently distinguished ; yet the protestant, as well as popish historians acknowledge, that as he was dutiful and faithful to his prince, so he maintained the most inviolable fidelity in all his engagements with the people of the Netherlands who submitted to his arms.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND
KING OF SPAIN.

BOOK XXIII.

AFTER the death of the duke of Parma, Philip committed the government of the Netherlands to count Peter Ernest of Mansveldt, whom he ordered to send an army, without delay, under the command of his son count Charles, to the assistance of the League. In obedience to this order, Charles immediately began his march with six thousand foot and one thousand horse, which was the greatest number of troops that could be spared from the defence of the Netherlands. These troops, when joined by those of the duke de Mayenne, composed an army of fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse, of which the duke was invested with the chief command.

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1593.
Count
Mansveldt
governor.

He began his operations with the siege of Noyon, in which he exerted himself with extraordinary vigour, and compelled the garrison to surrender, before

Siege of
Noyon.

before the king could arrive to their relief. From Noyon the troops were led into Lower Picardy, where some inconsiderable places were reduced. But soon after this success, count Mansveldt with the Spanish army returned to the Netherlands; and the operations of war were interrupted by certain political negotiations, from which Philip expected to derive greater advantage than from the progress of his arms.

Convention
of the States
of the
League.

HAVING, during several years, wasted the blood and treasure of his subjects, in fomenting the war in France, in expectation of some favourable opportunity of seizing upon the crown, his patience had been for some time past exhausted; and he had resolved to make trial, whether it was practicable to realise those alluring hopes by which he had so long been actuated. With this view his ministers had repeatedly requested the duke of Mayenne to summon an assembly of the States of the League, that it might be known what catholic Prince they inclined to choose for their sovereign. Mayenne still cherished the hopes of attaining the sovereignty himself, in some future more favourable crisis; and he abhorred the thoughts of having the French nation subjected to the dominion of Spain. Influenced by these motives, he had on different pretences declined for several months complying with Philip's request; but finding that he would not be diverted from his purpose, the duke had yielded to his importunity, and as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, had issued a summons for the States to meet at Paris on the 26th of January, one thousand five hundred and ninety-three. Philip sent the duke of Feria, and Mendoza, an eminent Spanish lawyer, to this assembly; and he fondly imagined, that by their influence, and that of the cardinal of Piacenza, the pope's legate, a majority of the deputies might be persuaded to abrogate the

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the Salic law, and to place his daughter Isabella on the throne.

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BUT it soon appeared how much his ministers in France had deceived him, and been themselves deceived. Neither the money which he had secretly bestowed to increase the number of his partizans, nor the armies which he had employed at so great an expence in their behalf, had produced in any considerable degree the effects which he expected. Some of the greatest bigots in the party, and some of the lowest of the people only, had given credit to his professions of zeal for religion; even the eyes of these men were now opened, and they perceived how little they had been indebted to the friendship of a prince, who now discovered, that his principal design in assisting them against their enemies, had been to take advantage of their distress, and to reduce them to the unhappy condition of a province of Spain. For it was in this light they considered his proposal; and were no less alarmed at his demand of their crown for Isabella, than if he had demanded it for himself. In these sentiments the deputies were secretly confirmed by Mayenne. But as both he and they were conscious that they were utterly unable to contend with Henry, if Philip should forsake them, they studied to conceal their aversion to his proposal. They neither agreed to it, nor rejected it; but expressed their solicitude with regard to the person whom the catholic king should make choice of for his daughter's husband; and insisted, that in the event of her election, she should not be married to any foreign prince.

1593.
Discovery of
Philip's
views.

THE Spanish ministers informed them, that their master had indeed designed to give her in marriage to Ernest archduke of Austria; but since it was not agreeable to the States, he was willing to bestow

flow her upon the duke of Guise. The duke de Mayenne did not expect this concession, and was greatly disconcerted when the Spanish ministers produced instructions, empowering them to make it. He was stung with the preference which was given to his nephew before his son ; and he now secretly resolved to obstruct the election of Isabella, to the utmost of his power. Finding it necessary however to disguise his sentiments, he affected to be highly pleased with the proposal ; but alleged that a regard to the honour of his catholic majesty, as well as to the safety of the duke of Guise, required that the election of Isabella should be deferred till an army was assembled, sufficient to overpower her enemies, and to fix her upon the throne. At present there was no army in France able to contend with the king of Navarre, and a considerable time must elapse before so great a force as was necessary could be raised. The Spanish ministers were sensible of the strength of this objection, they likewise knew that, without the assistance of Mayenne, they could not persuade the States to proceed to the election, and therefore, without great opposition, they agreed to a delay. In this manner did the duke de Mayenne, influenced partly by ambition, and partly by concern for the freedom and independence of the kingdom, disappoint for the present Philip's plan to enslave it ; and other events afterwards happened, which would have rendered it impossible, even for Mayenne himself, had he been so inclined, to carry it into execution.

Henry IV.
embraces
the catholic
religion.

THE king of France, who knew the purpose for which the States had been convened, though he was in a great measure ignorant of Mayenne's views, dreaded violently his concurring with the Spaniards ; and felt great anxiety with respect to the consequences which might follow. For Philip,

lip, he believed, would regard an election made by the States of the League, though only a small part of the kingdom, as a sufficient foundation for his daughter's claim, and would employ all his power to support it, whatever prejudice might thence arise to his affairs in the Netherlands. On the first opening of the assembly, Henry published an edict, declaring it to be illegal. And he gave permission, at the same time, to the catholic lords of his party, to enter into a conference with those of the League; intending to prevent the States from proceeding to extremities, by affording them the prospect of his speedy conversion to the popish faith.

THIS expedient was in some measure attended with the desired effect. The nobility of the League, disquieted with the apprehensions of being reduced under the dominion of Spain, and conscious, that if Philip should abandon them, they must soon yield to the king's victorious arms, were thrown into extreme perplexity; and many of them shewed that nothing was wanting but Henry's conversion, to determine them to acknowledge his authority. This condition however was still as necessary as ever. From the long continuance of the war, their religious prejudices were become unconquerable. With these their sense of honour and consistency conspired, and their regard to an oath which they had sworn, never to acknowledge an heretical prince for their sovereign. They were confirmed in their resolution, by the pope's legate, and by the archbishop of Lyons, and other partizans of Spain; and were still as much determined as ever to adhere to their engagements, without regard to any inconveniences or dangers, to which they might thereby be exposed.

WHILE the delay of the king's conversion proved an insurmountable objection against him with the

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members of the League, it gave the most sensible uneasiness to such of the catholics as had espoused his cause. They had been induced to remain with him, after the death of the late king, by his promise of embracing their religion. They had often urged him to fulfil this promise. Amidst the hurry of arms, he had found it easy to employ excuses, with which they had hitherto been satisfied. But their patience was now exhausted. They entertained suspicions that he had dealt insincerely with them. Though brave and warlike, they were sick of the hardships and fatigues of war; and they began to hold conferences together, on the subject of transferring their allegiance to Henry's cousin, the cardinal of Bourbon. Henry perceived that the critical period was now come, when he must resolve either to change his religion, or to forego the crown, and expose himself and his protestant subjects to the fury and vengeance of all the catholics in France, supported by his inveterate enemy the king of Spain. Even some of the protestant leaders were so candid as to acknowledge, that without embracing the catholic faith, he would never be able to preserve possession of the throne; and they exhorted him to embrace it, if his conscience would permit, as the only means by which they, as well as his other subjects, could be saved from ruin.

NEVER was an ingenuous prince placed in a more distressful situation. And never was a virtuous mind assailed by temptations more alluring. For he was not impelled only by ambition, or the desire of securing a great and mighty monarchy to himself, and his posterity. The desire of delivering his people from calamities, which were become intolerable, co-operated with his ambition, and both together put his integrity to the severest trial.

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WITHOUT any longer delay, he invited the catholic divines throughout his kingdom, to come and instruct him in the principles of their religion; and having heard him discourse concerning several of the points in dispute between the protestants and them, he declared himself entirely satisfied with their arguments, and soon afterwards went to mass in the church of St. Dennis, where he read aloud his confession of the catholic faith, and promised to maintain and defend it, against whatever attempts might be made for its subversion.

HENRY's conduct on this occasion was very differently interpreted by his cotemporaries, according as they stood well or ill affected to his person, or to the religion which he had embraced. It was alleged by some, that he had given a convincing proof of his indifference with regard to all religion, and that his conversion could be considered in no other light, but as hypocrisy and grimace. But others more justly observed, that if Henry had been capable of so great insincerity as his enemies ascribed to him, he would have listened to his interest at a much earlier period, and not have so long exposed himself to the danger of being for ever excluded from the throne. That no other satisfactory account could be given of his delay, but the scruples with which his regard to truth and his sense of honour had inspired him. That it was not surprising, that a prince who had passed his life amidst the tumults of war, should have been but very imperfectly acquainted with the niceties of theological disputes; or that his opinions in matters of such difficult decision, should have been gradually bent to a compliance with so great an interest as he had at stake. And considering how candid and sincere he had ever shewn himself in all his conduct, it might justly be supposed that he had still preserved his integrity, and that his religious sentiments

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had

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Effects of
Henry's con-
version.

had in reality undergone that change which he now expressed with so much seeming seriousness and solemnity.

WHATEVER were the real motives of Henry's conduct, it diffused a general joy and satisfaction among his subjects. Worn out with the miseries of so long a war, they exulted at the prospect of peace, though still at some distance, and being now freed from the fascination of their religious prejudices, they could perceive and admire those illustrious virtues in the character of their sovereign, by which he was so highly qualified to make them happy.

THE Spanish ministers, on the other hand, the cardinal legate, and the duke de Mayenne, were greatly alarmed at this event, and still more when they observed the reception which the news of it met with among the people. They represented it as a political device, intended to prevent the election of a catholic prince. They persuaded a great number of their adherents to swear that they would not acknowledge Henry for king, unless his conversion were ratified by the pope: and at the same time they employed all their influence at the court of Rome, to dissuade the pope from granting him an absolution.

Philip still
adheres to
his plan.

PHILIP was not discouraged from the prosecution of his scheme, either by the opposition which it had received from the States of the League, or by the conversion of the king. He became sensible however of his error in pitching on the duke of Guise (a young nobleman indeed of great merit and moderation, but possessed of little power or influence) for his daughter's partner in the throne. This error he corrected, and ordered his ministers to acquaint the duke de Mayenne, that he was now determined to give the preference to *his* son. In consequence

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consequence of this declaration, a negociation which Mayenne had begun for reconciling himself to the king, was broken off. That powerful leader and the Spaniards were henceforth on more amicable terms; and there was no longer any reason to doubt, that in future he would exert himself with vigour in promoting their designs ^a.

BUT there was much less probability at the present than any former period, that these designs would ever be accomplished. Philip had no general after the duke of Parma's death, qualified to enter the lists with the king of France. His treasury was exhausted, and even his credit was reduced so low, that the Genoese, and other Italian merchants, from whom he had already borrowed several millions of money, refused to lend him any more. His commanders in the Netherlands had not been able to make the necessary levies. His troops there were fewer in number than they had ever been since the commencement of the war; and yet so great arrears were due to him, that the officers found it impracticable to maintain their authority. The grearest part of the Spanish soldiers in the Low Countries had, upon their return from France, forsaken their standards; and having elected officers, and a commander in chief from among themselves, they had begun to exercise the most oppressive rapacity upon the inhabitants of the southern provinces.

State of his
affairs.

THE example of the Spaniards was quickly followed by the Italians and Walloons. The people in the open country were plundered in the most unmerciful manner. Those dreadful scenes of devastation were renewed, which had been acted after the death of Requesens; and the Flemings had never suffered so much from the enemy, as they
now

^a D'Avila, lib. xiv. Thuanus. lib. cvi. vii.

now suffered from troops engaged to protect and defend them.

1593.
Siege of
Gertruden-
berg.

PRINCE Maurice in the mean time exerted all his wonted activity to improve the advantage which these disorders afforded him, for extending the territories of the States. There was no town which the confederates were more desirous of acquiring than Gertrudenberg; which, as it lies nearer them than Breda, subjected them to perpetual anxiety for the preservation of that important city; besides giving annoyance to their inland trade, and furnishing the Spaniards with an easy entrance into Holland.

DURING the winter, Maurice had made diligent preparation for the siege of this place; and early in the spring, he was ready to take the field with such an army as he judged sufficient to ensure success. In order to prevent the enemy from suspecting his design, he directed his march first towards Sluys and Dunkirk; afterwards to Bois-le-Duc and Grave; and when by these feints he had induced count Mansveldt to divide his forces, he turned suddenly to Gertrudenberg.

MANSVELDT, anxious to avoid the reproach to which the loss of a place of so great consequence would expose him, drew together all the forces which could be spared from the garrisons of the other towns, with an intention to attempt to raise the siege. Prince Maurice expected this, and conducted his operations with the utmost celerity. Not only his pioneers, amounting to three thousand, but a great number of his troops were employed day and night in fortifying his camp, both on the side towards the town, to prevent the eruptions of the garrison, and on the side towards the country. And not satisfied with this, he broke down the
the

the dike of the river, and laid a great part of the adjacent country under water. After which, having approached the town as usual by trenches, he opened batteries against it at different places; and kept up a continual fire upon it from his fleet, on the side towards the river^b.

THE garrison consisted of Burgundians and Walloons, made a brave and vigorous resistance, and thereby gave count Mansveldt time to advance to their relief. The count's army amounted to more than double the number of the besiegers; and he attacked their intrenchments in different places, where the inundation permitted his approach. But Maurice had constructed his works with so much art, and strengthened them in such a manner with forts and redoubts, at proper distances, that all count Mansveldt's attempts proved ineffectual. His quarters were at the same time greatly streightened by the garrison of Breda, which sallied out upon him, and made considerable slaughter among his troops. He found it necessary to retire, and Gertrudenberg soon afterwards capitulated. In the garrison there were several of those soldiers, who some years before had sold the town to the Spaniards. These men suffered the punishment due to their treachery, but all the rest, and the inhabitants of the place, received the most advantageous and honourable terms.

COUNT Mansveldt had, in order to retrieve his honour, by making reprisals upon the enemy, led his army from Gertrudenberg, to invest an important fort belonging to the confederates, called Crevecœur. But this attempt likewise was frustrated by the celerity of Maurice, who arrived before the count's lines were finished; got between him and the

^b The Maese at Gertrudenberg is more properly a branch of the sea than a river, and admits of the largest ships.

the fort, and though greatly inferior in number, obliged him quickly to raise the siege.

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DURING the rest of the campaign, Mansveldt acted on the defensive; and no other event happened in the Netherlands this year, that deserves to be recorded.

Ernest, arch-
duke of Au-
stria, Govern-
or of the
Nether-
lands.

ALTHOUGH Philip had, after the death of the duke of Parma, committed the government to count Mansveldt, he had from the first intended that the count should resign it into the hands of Ernest archduke of Austria. This prince arrived in the beginning of the year one thousand five hundred and ninety-four at Brussels, and was received there with every mark of joy and satisfaction. He was a prince of a modest and gentle disposition; but he possessed not the capacity and vigour requisite in the present critical situation of affairs. Conscientious of his want of military talents, he fondly flattered himself with the hopes of prevailing on the revolted provinces to return to their allegiance by argument and persuasion. And with this view, he sent an invitation to the States to appoint ambassadors to treat with him concerning peace. But the States rejected his invitation, and accompanied their refusal with declaring, "That as from experience they could not repose any confidence in the king of Spain, so they would never enter into any treaty of reconciliation with him; but would maintain their liberty to the last, and lay down their lives sooner than submit to that intolerable yoke from which they had been so happily delivered."

IF it is true, as the Dutch historians relate, that two murderers were detected at this time, whom the Spanish

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Spanish ministers had employed to assassinate prince Maurice, it will not appear surprising that this declaration of the states should have contained expressions of resentment; especially as they were now in a much more flourishing condition than before, and had much less reason than at any former period to dread the power of Spain. For Philip, they knew was still more intent on acquiring the crown of France, than on recovering his hereditary dominions; and was likely to waste his strength in that chimerical attempt, before he could be made sensible of his folly.

THE situation of affairs in that kingdom became daily more unfavourable to his views. And the king's conversion soon produced the happy effects which were expected to arise from it.

Affairs of
France.

THE citizens of Meux were the first who sent him a tender of their submission; not long afterwards, the Parisians opened their gates to receive him; and the example of the metropolis, which had ever been the chief strength of the League, was quickly followed by Rouen, Lyons, and almost all the other great towns in the kingdom. Henry's conduct was admirably calculated to promote that affectionate zeal of his subjects, of which he received at this time so many striking proofs. For several years he had suffered from them the most cruel injuries and affronts; but his generous spirit, superior to resentment, abhorred the thought of punishing those who were willing to lay down their arms, and he received the submission of his most inveterate enemies, with a degree of goodness and condescension, which while it won *their* hearts, determined many others to imitate their example.

Wife and
generous
conduct of
the king.

HE granted to all who submitted to him, the most favourable terms; confirmed their privileges, as if they had done nothing to forfeit them; adhered with inviolable fidelity to his engagements; and

and published an edict of general indemnity, in order to set the minds of the people every where at ease, and to convince them that it would be their fault, and not his, if the public tranquillity were not speedily restored.

By these measures, which were equally prudent and magnanimous, the strength of the League was reduced so low, that Philip and the duke de Mayenne might have easily perceived the vanity of their designs.

Philip's
motives for
prosecuting
the war.

IT can hardly be imagined, that either the one or the other could any longer seriously entertain the hopes of success. But Mayenne was so deeply engaged with the Spaniards, that he knew not how to extricate himself with honour; especially as he had solemnly sworn, with many others of his party, that he would never acknowledge Henry for his sovereign, till he should receive absolution from the pope. And though Philip could not now be so chimerical, as to expect to procure the crown for Isabella, yet he could not overcome that implacable hatred, with which he had long been animated against the French monarch, in whom (judging of Henry from himself) he expected to find an irreconcilable and mortal foe. Besides, he was not ignorant of the justice of Henry's claim to the kingdom of Navarre, which Ferdinand the catholic had wrested from Henry's ancestors by fraud and violence; and he could not doubt that this active victorious prince would, as soon as his affairs were settled in France, either attempt to recover his hereditary kingdom, or endeavour to procure a compensation for it, by invading the Spanish dominions in the Netherlands.

MOVED by these considerations, Philip resolved to continue his hostilities, and by joining his forces with

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with those of the duke de Mayenne, to make himself master of as many towns as possible on the eastern frontier of France.

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THIS resolution he communicated to the archduke Ernest; who, agreeably to his instructions, sent count Charles of Mansveldt early in the spring to invade the province of Picardy, with an army of between eleven and twelve thousand men. The count laid siege to the town of La Capelle; and as he attacked it unexpectedly, he soon obliged the garrison to capitulate.

Siege of La
Capelle.

9th May.

THE king had set out from Paris as soon as he received intelligence of the siege, but could not arrive in time to prevent the surrender. Having been joined on his march by the dukes de Nevers and Bouillon, and finding himself at the head of a considerable army^c, he resolved to undertake some important enterprise, by which he might be compensated for the loss of La Capelle. One of the most considerable towns in that part of the kingdom was Laon, a place of great extent, strongly fortified, and well provided with every thing necessary to sustain a siege. The garrison, which was numerous, was commanded by Du Bourg, one of the bravest officers of the League; and there was at that time in the town, besides a great number of other nobility, the count of Somerive, the duke de Mayenne's second son. These considerations, far from discouraging the king from besieging Laon, were the motives which determined him to invest it, and he carried on his operations against it with his usual activity and vigilance.

Siege of
Laon.

THE besieged gave him all the annoyance and interruption in their power; and in some sallies which they made, before he had time to cover his troops,

^c Twelve thousand foot, and two thousand horse.

troops, he lost more than four hundred men. But his anxiety with regard to the issue of his enterprise, arose principally from the neighbourhood of the Spanish army, which was joined at this time by the duke de Mayenne, whom Philip, in order to prevent him from entering into an accommodation with the king, had intrusted with the chief command.

Mayenne attempts in vain to raise the siege.

VARIOUS motives concurred on this occasion to determine Mayenne to exert himself with vigour. There was much need of some splendid instance of success to support the drooping spirits of his party. Laon was the most considerable town which remained in his possession; and besides his son, and many of his faithful adherents, he had left his most valuable effects in it, as in a place where there was little danger of their falling into the hands of the enemy. He lost no time in marching to its relief. His army consisted of nearly the same number as that of the king, but being inferior in cavalry, he found it necessary to approach the town on that side, on which there lay a wood or forest, where the enemy's horse could not be easily employed. Henry had penetrated into his design, and taken possession of the wood with a part of his troops. Mayenne at first obliged them to retire; but the royalists having immediately received a reinforcement from the camp, returned to the charge, and stood their ground for some time with great bravery against the Spanish veterans. They would have been compelled however to give way a second time, if the royal cavalry, which had advanced to their relief, under the baron^d, now marshal de Biron, had not, conformably to their valiant leader's example and command, dismounted from their horses, and thrown themselves into the front

^d His father had been lately killed at the siege of Epernay.

front of the battle. The king himself soon after came up with the greatest part of his army; and, if the ground had permitted it, a general engagement would have ensued, but it allowed only of skirmishes, which continued with various success till the evening; when Mayenne, dreading that the king might send his cavalry to attack his rear, drew off his forces to a little distance from the wood.

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ALTHOUGH the nature of the ground in this rencounter prevented the king from availing himself of the superiority of his cavalry, yet this superiority proved afterwards of the greatest use. Mayenne being obliged to bring his provisions through an open country, from places at the distance of several miles, the king sent out his horse in numerous bodies to intercept his convoys; and although the duke attempted to bring them under a strong guard in the night, sometimes from one place and sometimes from another, yet such was the vigilance of the duke de Longueville, and the marshal de Biron, to whom the king gave the charge of intercepting them, that almost none of them were suffered to escape. These bold adventurous leaders were continually in motion. No guards which Mayenne could spare were able to withstand their vigorous attacks, and his army was at last reduced to so great distress, as made it necessary for him to decamp. He was sensible how difficult he must find it to retire in the face of a superior enemy: but if he remained any longer in his present situation, his troops, he perceived, must either perish for want, or lay down their arms.

THE duke had hitherto been unfortunate in his enterprises, and his misfortunes had contributed to obscure his fame; but on this occasion, he gave a conspicuous proof of consummate military skill,

His masterly
retreat.

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as well as of the most unquestionable personal courage and resolution. His troops drawn up in the most masterly manner, were every where so well prepared to receive the enemy, that the king, who attacked them with his cavalry as soon as they began their march, found it utterly impracticable to penetrate their ranks, whilst Mayenne himself marched on foot in the rear, fought on some occasions as a common soldier, and by the gracefulness of his person, added to the fortitude which he displayed, commanded universal admiration. In this manner he advanced slowly, till he reached a narrow defile, where he had planted some batteries of cannon; from the dread of which, the king ordered his troops to halt, and suffered the duke to pursue his march to La Fere without any farther molestation.

Laon surrenders.

HENRY then resumed his operations before the town. The besieged, though deprived of all hopes of relief, persisted for some time in their defence; but at last, finding their numbers greatly diminished, they offered to surrender on condition that the garrison and the count of Somerive should be allowed to march out with the honours of war; and to this condition the king readily consented, from his desire of preventing bloodshed, and of saving the fortifications of the town. The capitulation was signed on the 22d of July. The terms of it were religiously fulfilled; and Henry, far from discovering ill humour or resentment for the opposition which he had met with, embraced with pleasure the present opportunity of testifying his esteem for the duke de Mayenne, by shewing particular marks of respect and kindness to his son.

Submission of the duke of Guise.

So much goodness, united with so much heroism and magnanimity, had charms in the eyes of Henry's

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ry's enemies that were irresistible. The reduction of Laon, and his generous treatment of the inhabitants and garrison, were quickly followed by the voluntary surrender of Chateau-Thierry, Amiens, and Cambray. The duke of Lorraine, who from the beginning had given his assistance to the League, chose now to be at peace with a prince, in whose favour fortune, and his own merits, had produced so remarkable a revolution. And the duke of Guise whom the Spaniards had tantalized with a glimpse of royalty, but had afterwards neglected, moved partly by this consideration, and partly by his admiration of the king, entered into a treaty of reconciliation with him; and having delivered to him the towns of Rheims, Vitry, Rocroix, and several other places in Champagne, he was rewarded by Henry with the government of Provence^e.

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DURING the course of these events, so adverse to Philip's views in France, prince Maurice was engaged in the most important enterprise which he had hitherto undertaken, the siege of Groningen. That city, though almost surrounded with the territories of the States, had been preserved till now in its allegiance to Philip, by Verdugo, a Spanish officer of great abilities, with whose assistance the catholic part of the inhabitants had been able to keep the protestants under subjection. Jealous however of their liberty, they had never consented to admit any Spanish garrison within their walls, but three thousand of the citizens trained to the use of arms had been enlisted in the king's service for the defence of the town, while nine hundred of his foreign troops were permitted to take up their quarters in the suburbs.

Siege of
Groningen
by prince
Maurice.

MAURICE

^e D'Avila, lib. xiv. Thuanus, lib. ci. Meteren, lib. xiii. Bentivoglio, ann. 1594; and Sully's Memoirs, lib. vi.

HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF

MAURICE had long meditated the reduction of Groningen, not only because it would be of itself an acquisition of great value to the confederacy, but because it was the only place of consequence in those parts under the Spanish dominion, and furnished an easy entrance to the Spaniards into the northern provinces. Much pains had been taken and great exertions made by Verdugo for its security. Many bloody rencounters had passed between him and the forces of the states, in which, from the smallness of his numbers, and not from the want either of bravery or conduct, he was generally unsuccessful; and Maurice, powerfully seconded in all his operations by his cousin count William of Nassau, had at length reduced Verdugo to the necessity of quitting the province, and had made himself master of almost every pass by which the citizens could receive assistance or supplies.

THEY had not neglected to inform the archduke of the imminent danger to which they were exposed. At their request, the emperor of Germany had transmitted to Philip a representation, importing that although they desired nothing so much as to maintain their allegiance, and had preserved it long amidst much greater hardships and difficulties than any of his other subjects had endured, yet if the army were not immediately sent to their assistance, they would soon find it necessary to open their gates to the enemy. Philip, far from disregarding their application, made them the most gracious and flattering reply; and sent orders to the archduke to postpone every other object in the Netherlands to the relief of Groningen. But the greatest part of his forces were at this time engaged in the war in Picardy; and the remainder having mutinied against their officers, on account of their want of pay, refused to obey the governor's commands.

PRINCE

PRINCE Maurice therefore applied to the prosecution of the siege, with very little apprehension of meeting with any interruption from the Spaniards, although agreeably to his usual cautious maxims, he not only fortified his quarters, but likewise the several passes which led to them from the southern provinces. By beginning to open his trenches at a distance from the town, the siege was somewhat retarded, but he thereby prevented the loss of men which would otherwise have been sustained. On the third of June his batteries were unmasked, and soon afterwards all the out-works were laid in ruins. The besieged, alarmed with the rapidity of his progress, called the foreign troops, which were quartered in the suburbs, to their assistance. The defence was conducted for several weeks with the highest spirit and intrepidity, and much blood was spilt. But Maurice having blown up a ravelin, which was one of the principal defences of the place, the courage of the inhabitants began to fail, and there was nothing to be heard but complaints of the ingratitude of the king, in thus abandoning to their enterprising enemy a people so distinguished for their attachment and fidelity.

THEIR chief magistrate, Van Balen, who had long been secretly averse from the Spanish government, improved with great dexterity the opportunity which their present temper afforded him. He studied to confirm them in their sentiments of the king's ingratitude; he represented to them the folly of flattering themselves with the hopes of relief from a prince, who was more intent upon conquering the dominions of others, than providing for the security of his own. He painted in strong colours the miseries which they must suffer, if either the siege were to be prolonged, or the town to be taken by assault; and by expatiating on the advantages which would accrue to them from ac-

ceding to the union of Utrecht; he endeavoured to make them sensible, that if freedom from a foreign yoke was an object to be desired, it was infinitely more for their interest to submit to the generous enemy, who now besieged them, than even to be delivered from the siege.

THESE exhortations made the desired impression even upon the minds of those who were most attached to the catholic religion. That attachment had been long their only tie to the Spanish government; and it was overcome at this time by their indignation on account of Philip's negligence in providing for their defence, joined to their desire of participating of that civil liberty which had proved the source of so much prosperity and happiness to the confederated provinces.

Groningen
united to
the confede-
racy.

A DEPUTATION of the principal inhabitants was sent to treat of a surrender; and the prince, without hesitation, granted them the most advantageous terms. The city of Groningen was declared to be henceforth a member of the union of Utrecht. All the exemptions and ancient privileges of the inhabitants were confirmed; the civil government of the place was allowed to remain on the same footing as before, and liberty of conscience was established, with this restriction, that no other religion but the reformed should be publicly exercised. The citizens on the other hand engaged to acknowledge the supreme authority of the States; to submit to the general laws of the union; to contribute their share of the public expences; and to admit such a garrison into the town as the States should judge necessary for its security. The foreign soldiers were permitted to depart with their arms and baggage. The capitulation was signed on the 23d of July; and on the same day prince Maurice entered the town. He remained in it
for

for some time till certain articles of the capitulation were executed, after which, having committed the government to his kinsman, count William of Nassau, he set out for the Hague.

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WHILE Philip's power suffered so great a diminution in the northern provinces, his affairs in Brabant were daily more and more involved in disorder and confusion. The archduke had, with the utmost difficulty, raised money to satisfy the Walloon and Spanish mutineers; but no sooner had these men returned to their duty, than the Italians to whom the same arrears were due, resolved to employ the same means to effectuate their payment. Many of the officers concurred with the private men in forming this resolution, and they put it instantly into execution, by seizing on the town of Sichen, where a part of their number had been stationed. They were joined by soldiers from all the garrisons in the neighbourhood, who continued flocking to them, till they amounted to two thousand horse and foot.

Mutiny of
the Spanish
and Italian
soldiers.

NOT satisfied with laying the country round the town under contribution, they spread themselves over the province, made excursions to the very gates of Brussels where the governor resided, and plundered the people with as much cruelty as if they had been engaged in open war. The governor having tried the power of persuasion without effect, resolved to employ force to reduce them; and for this purpose he sent the Spanish troops which he had lately pacified, under Lewis de Velasco, to besiege Sichen. In the beginning of this sedition, prince Maurice had made the mutineers an offer of shelter and protection in the territories of the States, and they readily agreed to accept this offer in case they should find it neces-

The muti-
neers pro-
tected by
Maurice.

A a 2 fary;

z Meteren, lib. xvii. Bentivoglio, part iii. lib. i. Grotius, lib. iii.

His motive.

cessary; but informed him, that they would defend themselves in Sichen as long as they were able, against the Spaniards. They accordingly did so, and made several desperate sallies, in which many on both sides were slain. Finding however that the place was too weak to be long defended against an enemy so much superior in number, they retired under the fortifications of Breda and San Gertrudenberg, where provisions were sold to them by the subjects of the States. The intention of Maurice in this singular treatment of an enemy, was only to prolong the term of their disobedience. He made no attempt to persuade them to enter into the service of the confederacy, but gave permission to the archduke to send an ambassador to treat with them; and when, after a tedious negotiation, they had agreed to take up their quarters in Tirlemont, and to remain there till their demands were satisfied, without renewing their hostilities, Maurice readily allowed them to depart. They required a Spanish nobleman to be given as a hostage for the fulfilment of the governor's promises; and so great was the disorder of the king's finances at this period that these troops were suffered to remain inactive at Tirlemont for near a year before their arrears were paid ^h.

Death of
Ernest, andFuentes go-
vernor.

BEFORE the expiration of this term, the governor was seized with a hectic fever, of which he died on the 20th of February, in the forty-second year of his age. He named the count of Fuentes for his successor, and his choice was soon after ratified by the king. This nobleman having been sent into the Netherlands a little before the death of the duke of Parma, had, agreeably to Philip's instructions, during the government of count Mansveldt and the archduke, possessed a principal share in the administration. By his advice, or more

pro-

^h Grotius, lib. iii. Meteren, lib. xvii. p. 581. Bentivoglio, part iii. lib. i.

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properly by his authority, count Mansveldt had published a barbarous edict, commanding all prisoners to be put to death; and ordering the king's troops who, in their excursions into the territories of the States, had been satisfied for several years past with levying contributions, henceforth to lay waste the country with fire and sword.

THE States; in return, published a manifesto, in which they expressed their abhorrence of this barbarity; but at the same time declared, that if the governor did not recall his edict against a certain time, they would retaliate the cruelty which it prescribed upon the troops and subjects of the king. This measure had been urged by Fuentes, on the pretence of shortening the duration of the war, although the experience of his kinsman, the duke of Alva, might have convinced him that, considering the strength to which the confederacy had attained, it would serve only to increase the calamities of the war, and to render it perpetual. Count Mansveldt came soon to be sensible that these must be the consequences, and either revoked his edict, or gave orders to prevent it from being carried into execution.

FUENTES however still continued to exercise an unlimited influence in the government. The Flemish nobility complained bitterly, as in the time of cardinal Granvelle, of the insignificance to which they were reduced, and before the death of the archduke they had given some striking proofs of their discontent. This discontent was greatly heightened when the count was appointed governor: they saw then how little sincerity there had been in those soothing promises which the king had made them some years before, when they consented to the return of the foreign troops. They perceived how little trust and confidence he reposed in them,
and

Discontent
of the Flemish nobles.

and were sensible at last of the truth of what the prince of Orange had so often told them, that, by their agreement with the duke of Parma, they would reduce their country to the miserable state of a province of Spain. The duke d'Arfehott and count Charles of Mansveldt, who had reason to expect to have been preferred before Fuentes, would not submit to the indignity put upon them, but resigned their employments, and left the Netherlands. The duke d'Arfehott died afterwards in Venice, and count Mansveldt in Hungary, where he commanded the emperor's army against the Turks.

Vigorous
conduct of
Fuentes.

FUENTES in the mean time entered upon the exercise of his office, and notwithstanding the prejudices which the Flemings seem justly to have entertained against him, he soon discovered that his abilities were not unequal to the charge with which he was invested. He applied with great success to quell the mutinous spirit of the army, and in a few months put it upon a much more respectable footing, both as to discipline and numbers.

Declaration
of war be-
tween
France and
Spain.

PHILIP had greater occasion now than ever for abilities and vigour in the person to whom he committed the government of the Netherlands. The League in France was about to expire, notwithstanding his exertions to prevent it; and the French monarch, being firmly seated on his throne, declared war against him, prohibiting all commerce with his subjects, and granting liberty to the French to invade and plunder, and take possession of whatever dominions belonged to the crown of Spain.

Henry's
motives.

THIS measure was condemned by many, as being highly inexpedient at the present juncture, on account of the exhausted state to which his kingdom was reduced by the long continuance of the civil

civil wars, and no person was more sensible of the strength of this objection than the king himself; but he believed that, in the present temper of the catholic king, peace could not be obtained from him upon honourable terms. He was persuaded that war with the Spaniards must of necessity continue some time longer; and he thought, that as nothing would contribute more to extinguish the flames of civil discord than a foreign war, it would be easier to interest his catholic subjects in the prosecution of it, if it were regarded as a war between the crowns, to which political motives had given birth, than if it were suffered to remain on its present footing, and considered as carried on by Philip for the sake of religion. It is not indeed improbable, that personal animosity added force to these incitements. Philip had ever treated Henry in the most contemptuous manner; and, under the mask of religion, had endeavoured first to exclude him, and afterwards to expel him from the throne. Henry detested that artifice and duplicity in Philip's character, of which, in his late attempt to procure the abolition of the Salic law, he had given such incontestable evidence; and the terms in which his declaration of war was expressed, demonstrate, that resentment had, on the present occasion, a considerable influence on his conduct.

PHILIP's answer to this declaration was perfectly conformable to his character. All his interferences in the affairs of France had proceeded, he said, from his concern for the prosperity of the people, and the security of the catholic faith; and he declared, that his intention now was not to enter into war with the crown or nation of France, but only to persevere in protecting the true catholics of that kingdom from the oppression of the prince of Bearn and his adherents¹.

BOTH

¹ D'Avila, lib. xiv.

BOTH kings had been employed, before their declaration of war, in preparing for the recommencement of hostilities; and Henry, besides his domestic preparations, had entered into a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive with the United Provinces. In fulfilment of an article of this treaty, the States sent a body of horse and foot, under Philip count of Nassau, to invade the province of Luxemburg. Their enterprises were for some time attended with success; but Fuentes, having dispatched the brave Verdugo with superior forces to oppose them, they were obliged, after several encounters, to quit the province; and were soon after recalled, and stationed near the frontier of Brabant, where it was expected they would be of equal service to the French monarch, by detaining the Spaniards in the Netherlands.

Siege of Catelet.

THE army of the States however, even after it was joined by these troops, was not able to furnish full employment to those which the governor had prepared. He left an army under Mondragone to check the progress of prince Maurice, and set out himself for Picardy with the rest of his forces. His first enterprise was the siege of Catelet, of which he made himself master in a few weeks, though it was strongly fortified, and bravely defended by the garrison.

Affairs of
Gomeron
and d'Orvilliers.

DURING this siege, Fuentes had reason to flatter himself with the hopes of acquiring possession of the castle and town of Ham without bloodshed. The castle was held by an officer called d'Orvilliers, and the town by his half-brother, whose name was Gomeron. These two men had been violent partizans of the league, and the latter resolved to deliver the town to the Spaniards rather than to the king of France; but he

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he demanded from Fuentes a reward of twenty thousand crowns for the town, and a still higher reward, if he should prevail upon his brother (which he engaged to do) to deliver up the castle. The count readily agreed to these terms, and paid him the twenty thousand crowns upon his admitting a thousand Spanish troops into the town; but required Gomeron himself and his two younger brothers to remain with him as hostages, till the castle likewise should be put into his possession. To this Gomeron consented, from a fond persuasion that his brother would imitate his example, rather than expose *him* and his other brothers to the resentment of the Spaniards, especially as their mother was in the castle, whose intreaties he expected d'Orvilliers would be unable to resist. But d'Orvilliers chose rather to abandon his brothers to their fate, than betray his charge to the enemies of his country; and he admitted the duke de Bouillon into the castle, with a numerous body of the king's troops, who attacked the Spaniards in the town, and either put them to the sword or took them prisoners. The mother of Gomeron, now trembling with anxiety for her children's preservation, came to Fuentes, and represented, that d'Orvilliers repented of what he had done, and was willing to deliver the castle to him, if he would come himself with his army to receive it. The count, believing her representation to be true, the more readily as she herself seemed entirely convinced of the truth of it, advanced with his forces towards Ham; but finding that the mother had been deceived, and that, in order to avoid her importunity, d'Orvilliers had left the place, and resigned his government to another, he was inflamed with rage, and put Gomeron to death in presence of the army. This unhappy man did not perhaps deserve so severe a punishment from the hands

hands of Fuentes; but it was due to the treachery and egregious folly into which his avarice had betrayed him ^k.

FROM Ham the count conducted his troops, after they had rested some days, to lay siege to Dourlens. This town being near the frontier of the Netherlands, was strongly fortified and garrisoned by a number of select troops. Still however it was necessary, in order to prevent it from falling into the enemy's hands, that the garrison should be augmented; and no sooner had the marshals Bouillon and Villars, whom the king had sent to watch the motions of the Spanish army, heard that Dourlens was invested, than they assembled all the troops in the neighbourhood, amounting to a thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, and advanced towards the town, in hopes of being able to force their way through the enemy's intrenchments; but Fuentes, having received intelligence of their design, left a part of his forces to guard his trenches, and marched out with the rest, in order of battle, to an advantageous situation at a little distance from the town. When the duke of Bouillon observed Fuentes so well prepared for his defence, he counselled marshal Villars to retire; but that intrepid general, whose courage was ever too ardent and impetuous, refused to comply, and still continued to advance, till his troops were almost surrounded by the Spaniards. A desperate and bloody battle ensued; but as there was no proportion in respect of numbers between the contending parties, the French were almost entirely cut to pieces, Villars himself was slain, and the cavalry, after great loss, were obliged to retire.

DURING the combat, the garrison sallied out upon the troops which had been left to defend the camp and trenches; but through the wise precaution

^k Bentivoglio, part iii . lib. ii.

caution which had been taken, the Spaniards proved victorious; and Fuentes resumed with fresh spirit and vigour the operations of the siege. Among the besieged there were more than three hundred gentlemen, who inspired the garrison with the same generous spirit by which they themselves were actuated, and defended the town several days with extraordinary courage and resolution.

BUT their skill and conduct were not equal to the bravery which they displayed. In an assault on the thirty-first of July, they were overpowered by the assailants, and almost the whole garrison, amounting to more than a thousand men, with their governor the count of Dinan, were put to the sword.

FUENTES emboldened by his success, resolved next to lay siege to Cambray; the reduction of which was the principal object of his present expedition. Siege of
Cambray.

THIS important city had been wrested from the Spaniards, as is above related, by the duke of Anjou; and Anjou had bequeathed it to his mother Catherine of Medicis, by whom a French gentleman of the name of Balagny had been appointed governor both of the town and citadel. Balagny taking advantage of the troubles in France, had for several years acknowledged no superior; and as he had studied to maintain some degree of neutrality between the contending parties, he had been suffered to act as sovereign both of the city and its territory. But apprehending, after the discomfiture of the League, that it was necessary for him to make a choice, either of the king of France or Spain, for his protector, he agreed to acknowledge his dependence on the French monarch; on condition, that he should be permitted to enjoy under him possession of the sovereignty, with the title of prince of Cambray; and to these terms Henry the more readily con-

sented

sented, as he dreaded, that if he rejected them, they would be granted by the king of Spain.

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BALAGNY, being thus confirmed in his possession, spared no expence or pains in strengthening the fortifications of the place. The garrison amounted to three thousand foot and six hundred horse, the greatest part of which were French troops, of the most unquestionable bravery. The town was strong, and it was well furnished with military stores and provisions.

DETERMINED by these considerations, some of the principal officers in the Spanish army endeavoured to persuade the count de Fuentes to relinquish his design, by representing, that before he could accomplish it, either the winter season would overtake him, or the French monarch, being disengaged from his enemies in other quarters, would arrive with a superior army, and attack him after his troops were diminished in number, and exhausted with the operations of the siege; but Fuentes, ambitious to distinguish his administration by so important an acquisition, and elated by the success with which his enterprises had been hitherto attended, refused to listen to these remonstrances; and, having received a great augmentation of forces from the neighbouring provinces, he began his operations without delay. They were carried on with a degree of skill and vigour which would have reflected honour on the greatest generals of the age; and notwithstanding the most intrepid defence, conducted with much prudence by the celebrated de Vic, whom Henry had sent with a reinforcement of troops to the assistance of the besieged, he opened his batteries in a few weeks so near the town, that some of its principal defences were destroyed, and a great part of the wall was laid in ruins. Still however his success was doubtful. He encountered the most discouraging difficulties

culties in furnishing his troops with provisions; and nothing but the most unconquerable resolution, added to the dread of tarnishing the glory which he had already acquired, could have prevented him from abandoning his attempt.

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BUT he was saved from that mortification, by the inhabitants of the town, who having been long accustomed to the mild administration of their archbishops, had borne with extreme impatience the haughty imperious behaviour of Balagny; and had been almost reduced to despair, by the extortion, rapine, and insolence of his wife, by whom he suffered himself to be entirely governed. The citizens had secretly sent a deputation of their number to the French monarch, intreating him to deliver them from the yoke of their oppressor, and offering on that condition to submit to his authority, and to receive a garrison of his troops. But through the influence of the famous Gabrielle d'Etrées, whom Balagny had gained over to his interest, Henry not only refused to comply with their request, but confirmed Balagny in his usurped authority.

Cambray
given up by
the citizens.

THE inhabitants, inflamed now with resentment against the king, as well as against Balagny, resolved to embrace the first opportunity of putting themselves under the dominion of their former master the king of Spain; and they were confirmed in their resolution, by the numerous ecclesiastics in the town, who hoped by this measure to effectuate the re-establishment of the archbishop, whom Balagny had expelled. Having formed their plan, they delayed the execution of it, till Balagny and de Vic were wholly occupied in taking measures against an assault, which they believed to be intended by the Spaniards. At that time they ran to arms, and made themselves masters of one

of

of the gates of the city. De Vic, Balagny, and his wife, spared no pains to divert them from their purpose, but all their endeavours proved ineffectual. Two of the principal citizens were immediately sent to Fuentes, with an offer to surrender the town on the following conditions, to which he readily agreed: That the soldiers should be restrained from plunder: that all past offences should be forgiven: that the citizens should enjoy their wonted privileges, and the archbishop be restored to his ancient jurisdiction and authority.

THE garrison immediately retired into the citadel, where they expected to have been able to defend themselves for a considerable time. But having found, upon searching the magazines, that there was hardly provisions enough to support them for three days, they agreed on the first summons to capitulate. The wife of Balagny had reduced them to this necessity, by selling, at an exorbitant price, without her husband's knowledge, the provisions which had been laid up in store.

DURING the siege this woman had discovered a degree of spirit, capacity, and courage above her sex; but being unable to bear the consciousness of that egregious folly into which her avarice had betrayed her, and which was now attended with consequences so fatal to her ambition, she was overwhelmed with anguish and despair; and refusing to take either medicine or food, she died miserably, before the citadel was delivered to the Spaniards.

THE capitulation was signed on the seventh of October, and the garrison marched out with all the honours of war upon the ninth; immediately after which, Fuentes having stationed five hundred Spaniards in the citadel, and two thousand Germans in the town, set out for the Netherlands with the
rest

rest of his forces, and put them into winter-quarters in Flanders, Artois, and Hainault¹.

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XXIII.

THE reader will not suppose that the active spirit of the French monarch could be unemployed during the course of these disastrous events. He was deeply affected by the loss of the important towns which had been conquered by Fuentes, and would have marched in person to their relief, had he not believed that his presence was still more necessary in another part of his dominions. For Philip having resolved to prosecute the war with vigour in different quarters at the same time, had ordered Velasco, the constable of Castile and governor of Milan, to lead an army of ten thousand men into Burgundy; and these troops, were upon their arrival in Franche Comté, joined by the duke de Mayenne with a thousand foot and four hundred horse. This army was greatly superior to any which marshal Biron, who commanded in these parts, could assemble to oppose it; and Henry dreaded that the province of Burgundy would be speedily overrun. Having therefore sent orders to his troops in different parts to follow him, he set out himself at the head of one thousand eight hundred horse and foot, with an intention to harass the enemy, till the rest of his army should arrive.

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Affairs in
Burgundy.

THE Spaniards had passed the Saone, and advanced as far as Fontaine-Françoise, when Henry attacked them on their march, with a degree of impetuosity and ardour that filled Velasco with astonishment. The king was bravely supported on this occasion by the marquis de Mirebeau, the count de Gramont, and several others of his nobility; but above all, by the intrepid Biron, who fought long after he was covered with the blood that flowed from

Battle of
Françoise.

¹ D'Avila, lib. xv. Bentivoglio, part iii. lib. ii.

from a wound which he had received in the beginning of the engagement. The king by his exhortations, and still more by his example, inflamed his troops to a degree of madness. At the head of his squadrons, he plunged sword and hand into the midst of the enemy, broke through their ranks, and threw their van into confusion.

HAD Velasco ordered his whole army to advance, it is impossible but Henry must have been surrounded and overpowered. But his courage on this occasion supplied the want both of caution and of numbers. Velasco intimidated by the unexampled boldness which he had seen displayed, gave orders for a retreat, and left the king in possession of the field of battle. Early next morning he repassed the Saone, notwithstanding the earnest remonstrances of the duke de Mayenne, who had procured certain intelligence of the strength of the enemy. Mayenne then intreated Velasco to leave him a part of the forces to raise the siege of Dijon, which had been invested by a party of the royalists, and to enable him to defend such other towns on this side of the river as were still in his possession. But this likewise the Spanish general refused, and continued to retire till he reached the town of Gray; where he fortified his camp in the strongest manner, with a resolution to act only on the defensive, in case the royal army should advance.

Reconcile-
ment of
Mayenne
with the
king.

VELASCO, who was utterly unpractised in the military art, appears to have been strongly actuated with a dread of the superior skill and bravery of the king. But the duke de Mayenne likewise perceived in his conduct towards *him*, on this occasion, manifest symptoms of diffidence and distrust. This the duke could not help attributing to Velasco's instruction from the court of Spain; and

and he could not doubt, that through the ill offices of the Spanish ministers in France, Philip had conceived some fresh jealousy of his designs. He was therefore thrown into great perplexity, while he believed that he should ere long be abandoned by the Spaniards, as he had already been by most of his adherents in France; and could hardly suppose that now, when his power was reduced so low, he would be able to obtain advantageous conditions from the king. After long deliberation, he formed the resolution of going to Madrid, to justify his conduct to Philip, against the misrepresentations of his ministers. But he was saved from that fatal step by the invincible goodness of the French monarch, who, having been informed of his distress, sent Lignerac, a friend and confident of the duke, to assure him of his esteem, and to inform him, that he was still ready to receive him into favour, and to grant him the most honourable terms.

HENRY did not require an immediate submission from him, because the duke had often declared, that he would never acknowledge his authority till the pope should grant him absolution; but he desired that he should retire to Chalons, one of his own towns, and wait there for that event, in full confidence that no advantage should be taken in the mean time either of himself or his adherents.

MAYENNE, who knew with how much safety he might rely on Henry's promise, and was deeply penetrated with a sense of the generous offer which had been made to him, accepted of it without hesitation, and left the Spanish camp.

SOON after this agreement, Henry advanced to the banks of the Saone, with a resolution to transport his forces, consisting of seven thousand foot and two thousand horse, into Franche

Compté, where Velasco lay intrenched. In spite of the troops which had been planted to dispute his passage, he forded the river about three miles below the town of Gray, and then led his army towards the enemy; but finding their intrenchments too strongly fortified to be attacked with any probability of success, he turned aside, and began to lay waste the country, or to levy contributions from the inhabitants. Velasco kept still within his camp. At length the Swiss Cantons, as friends and protectors of the people of Franche Compté, interposed their influence. At their desire, the king readily desisted from his depredations; and having led back his troops into his own dominions, he resolved to march as soon as possible to the frontiers of the Netherlands.

The pope
grants Hen-
ry absoluti-
on.

HE was in daily expectation, at this time, of receiving the pope's absolution, which had been much longer delayed than he expected, through the violent opposition of the Spanish ministers at Rome; but Clement now perceiving, that Henry was firmly established on the throne, and dreading, that by a longer delay he might exhaust his patience, and provoke him to throw off his allegiance to the Holy See, in imitation of Henry VIII. of England, in the pontificate of Clement VII. he resolved to run the risk of giving offence to Philip, and on the 16th of September pronounced the sentence of absolution. This event gave inexpressible joy to all the true catholics of France; and the treaty of agreement, which had been begun with the duke de Mayenne, was soon after brought to the desired conclusion. Such other members of the League as had not already submitted, imitated the example of their leader. Internal peace was every where established, and Henry had leisure to apply his whole attention to the Spanish war^m.

THE

^m D'Avila, lib. xiv. Thuanus, anno 1595. Perefice Elzevir, p. 230, &c.

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THE transactions in the Netherlands this year were less important and interesting than in any former campaign since the commencement of the war, which was principally owing to the governor's prudent choice of the vigilant, experienced Mondragone, as commander in chief of the forces during his absence. About the middle of July, prince Maurice besieged the town of Groll; but Mondragone, having augmented his army, by making draughts from the garrisons of the neighbouring towns, advanced towards him with so much celerity, that not having had time to complete his entrenchments, Maurice was obliged to raise the siege. The two armies lay long in sight of each other; and as they were nearly equal in strength, and both generals exerted an equal degree of vigilance and circumspection, they effectually prevented one another from undertaking any important enterprise.

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XXIII.

1595.
Affairs of
the Netherlands.

THERE were frequent skirmishes with various success; but the only one which deserves to be mentioned was a rencounter near the river Lippe, where Maurice ordered count Philip de Nassau, with five hundred horse, to lie in ambush in a wood, to intercept a party of the enemy which had been sent out for provisions. Of this Mondragone had received intelligence, and with great secrecy stationed a body of horse still more numerous in another wood at a little distance from the first. When the Spanish foragers arrived at the ambuscade, they were attacked on every side, and repulsed with considerable slaughter; but being speedily reinforced by their friends in the neighbouring woods, they returned to the charge. The Dutch troops, astonished to find themselves caught in their own snare, were at last overpowered by numbers; three hundred of them, with their commander, were killed, and the rest obliged to save themselves by flight.

THIS was the last memorable event of the campaign, although the two generals remained in sight of each other till the end of October, when they broke up their camps, and put their troops into winter-quarters ; and Mondragone died not long after at the age of ninety-two, having to the last preserved sufficient vigour to fulfil, with distinguished reputation, all the duties of a commander. He had served in the Netherlands near fifty years, and had a principal share in almost every military enterprize, yet he had the singular fortune to escape without a wound ⁿ.

ⁿ Grotius, lib. iv. Bentivoglio, part iii. lib. ii.

During the course of the transactions recorded in this book, the Dutch performed their first expedition to India ; but as their acquisitions at this time were inconsiderable, and their most important conquests over Philip's subjects in that distant region were not atchieved till several years after the present period, I have reserved the relation of the whole for the history of the subsequent reign.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE REIGN OF
PHILIP THE SECOND
KING OF SPAIN.
BOOK XXIV.

FROM the capacity and vigour, of which the count de Fuentes had given so many proofs since his accession to the government, there was reason to expect, that he would have been suffered long to retain possession of it; but Philip, having from the beginning intended that he should continue governor only for one year, had immediately after the death of Ernest fixed upon the cardinal archduke Albert for his successor.

BOOK
XXIV.

1595.
The arch-
duke Albert
governor of
the Nether-
lands.

THIS prince, nephew to Philip, and youngest brother to the emperor, had been entrusted with the regency of Portugal. By his prudent administration he had acquired universal esteem; and Philip, who entertained the highest opinion of his abilities, believed that no person was better qualified, either to prosecute the war with vigour, or to bring it to the desired conclusion.

He

HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF

HE arrived at Brussels about the middle of February one thousand five hundred and ninety-six, having brought with him a reinforcement of Italian and Spanish troops, and which was of still greater utility, a sum of money, amounting to fifteen hundred thousand crowns.

THE count de Fuentes, unwilling to act in a subordinate station, in a country where he had enjoyed the chief command, resigned the government to the archduke, and set out for Spain.

Siege of La
Fere.

ALBERT immediately applied to make the preparations necessary for a new campaign; and conformably to his instructions from Philip, he turned his principal attention to the war with France. His first object was the relief of La Fere in Picardy, which had remained in the hands of the Spaniards ever since it was delivered by the League to the duke of Parma.

TOWARDS the end of the preceding year, it had been invested by the French monarch; but as it was strongly fortified, and the garrison consisted of chosen troops, commanded by Alvaro Osorio, a Spanish officer of distinguished reputation, Henry was satisfied with blocking it up so as to prevent the entrance of supplies. This he accomplished with little difficulty. The blockade had lasted for several weeks, and Osorio had conveyed intelligence to the archduke, that if he was not speedily relieved, the want of provisions would render it impossible for him to hold out for any considerable time. The Spanish army was assembled at Valenciennes, and almost ready to begin its march; but the more the governor and his council of war reflected on the difficulties which must attend the attempting to raise the siege, by marching directly to La Fere, the more insurmountable they appeared. For they could not, it was observed, approach to that town, without leaving behind them St. Quintin, Ham, Guise, Peronne, and several other fortified

fortified places, the garrisons of which would harass them on their march, break up the roads, and intercept their convoys of provisions. An impassable marsh rendered the town inaccessible on every side, except where the French monarch had strongly fortified his intrenchments. Even if they should come in sight of the town, yet, before they could enter it, they must either attack the enemy within their camp, or engage with their whole army in the open field. They could not attack them in their camp, without exposing themselves to almost certain ruin; Henry would not give them an opportunity of fighting in the field, unless his army, which was increasing daily, were superior to theirs, and the consequences of a defeat would prove fatal not only to the army, but to all the Spanish conquests in France, and perhaps too to the king's authority in the Netherlands.

DETERMINED by these considerations, the archduke formed the resolution of besieging some other frontier town, of sufficient importance to induce Henry either to raise the siege of La Fere, or compensate for the loss of that place, in case it should be obliged to capitulate.

HE hesitated for some time whether he should lead his army against St. Quintin or Peronne; but he soon laid aside the thoughts of attacking either of these places, and resolved to undertake the reduction of Calais, which he believed would be an easier, as well as a much more important acquisition.

Siege of
Calais.

THIS enterprize was suggested to the governor by the Sieur de Rône, a native of France, and formerly a violent partisan of the League, who had entered into the service of Spain against his king and country. He was a man of a dark intriguing spirit, whom no tie could bind but interest; but he was bold and active, sagacious and penetrating, and

The Sieur
de Rône.

and eminently distinguished for his skill in the art of war. He had received intelligence that Calais, like many other towns in the kingdom, had been much neglected during the civil war ; that although the king had ordered the fortifications of it to be examined, yet his other occupations had not allowed him to bestow that attention on it which its importance deserved ; and that, as some of the works were ruinous, so the garrison was too small to defend a place of so great extent. For these reasons, the governor approved highly of De Rône's proposal, and he committed the execution of it to himself.

IN order to prevent the enemy from suspecting what was intended, it was communicated only to two or three of the principal officers ; and the arch-duke gave out that his design was to relieve La Fere. He accordingly began his march towards that place while De Rône turned suddenly to Calais with a body of select troops, and attacked the fort and bridge of Nieulai, which commands the entrance to the town by land. He made himself master of it with very little difficulty, and then proceeded to attack the fort of Risbane, which stands at the mouth of the harbour, and was of the greatest importance for the preservation of the place. The garrison of this fort made a more vigorous resistance than that of Nieulai ; but no sooner had De Rône opened a battery against them, by which only a few were killed, than they were seized with a sudden panic, and offered to capitulate. This rapid progress exceeded De Rône's most sanguine expectations, and it gave him the greater joy, as not long after the Risbane had surrendered, some ships with troops for the reinforcement of the garrison which had had arrived from Boulogne, finding the entrance to the harbour in his possession, were obliged to return.

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THE archduke, who was in the neighbourhood of Valenciennes, when he received intelligence of this fortunate commencement of his enterprize, set out immediately with his whole army for Calais, and pitched his camp in such a situation as he hoped would prevent the approach of the enemy.

HE first attacked the suburbs, and took them by assault; nor did he encounter greater difficulty in making himself master of the town. His cannon had hardly begun to play upon it, when Vidossan, the governor, retired with the garrison into the castle; and quickly despairing of being able to defend himself in it, any better than he had done in the town, he offered to give it up in six days, if he was not relieved before the expiration of that time. The archduke, in order to save his troops and the fortifications of the place, readily agreed to this proposal, never doubting that he was fully able to prevent the entrance of any reinforcement either by sea or land.

THE king, in the mean time, heard with much anxiety of the progress of the Spanish arms. But the blockade of La Fere having continued for several months, he expected that the garrison must be reduced in a few days to the necessity of capitulating; and he thought it probable, that after finishing his present enterprize (which he could not abandon without loosing all the expence and labour which he had bestowed upon it), he would arrive in time to raise the siege of Calais. He went himself however with a part of his cavalry to Boulogne, that he might be ready to administer such assistance to the garrison of Calais, as might enable them to hold out till his whole army should be at liberty to advance to their relief.

UPON

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Henry at-
tempts in
vain to raise
the siege.

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UPON his arrival in Boulogne, he was informed of the capitulation above mentioned. He lamented bitterly that he had not brought with him a greater proportion of his troops; but finding it necessary to make some exertion without delay, he prevailed on Campagnol, the governor of Bolougne, with three hundred chosen men, to attempt to force his way in the night through the Spanish lines.

THIS arduous undertaking was executed without the loss of a single man; and Campagnol had no sooner arrived in the castle, than having read the king's orders to the garrison, he required them all to swear that they would defend the fortress to the last.

IN the evening of the 6th day of the truce, they were summoned to fulfil their engagement; when they replied that they had received the reinforcement which they expected. But it soon appeared how unequal they were to the defence of so weak a place, against so numerous an enemy.

EARLY next morning De Rône began to play off his batteries, and in a few hours a great part of the wall was laid in ruins.

Calis taken
by storm.

AN Italian regiment, through whose negligence Campagnol had got into the fort, was ordered to advance to the assault, and was followed by the Walloons and Spaniards. The garrison received them in the breach with undaunted courage, and, after an obstinate engagement, in which great numbers fell on both sides, compelled them to retire. But the Italians returned immediately to the charge; and at last through the great superiority of their numbers, they overpowered the garrison, entered along with them into the fort, and put all of them to the sword, except Campagnol, and a few others, who took refuge in the church, and afterwards surrendered at discretion. In this man-

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ner did Calais fall into the hands of the Spaniards in less than three weeks after De Rône had begun the siege. The king left Boulogne, after having taken precautions for the preservation of that place, and returned to La Fere. And the archduke, after staying eight or ten days in Calais to repair the fortifications, led his troops against the town of Ardres.

THE garrison of Ardres consisted of two thousand five hundred men, commanded by the marquis of Belin, the lieutenant governor of the province, and by the Sieur de Annebourg, governor of the town, an officer of distinguished courage and capacity. By frequent vigorous sallies, the operations of the besiegers were greatly retarded. At length however they took the suburbs by assault, and De Rône began to batter the walls of the town. But considering the strength of the place, and the number and bravery of the garrison, he had little reason to hope for success before the conclusion of the siege of La Fere; when there was no room to doubt that the king would advance without loss of time to the relief of Ardres.

NOTWITHSTANDING this encouraging circumstance, the marquis de Belin called a council of war, and urged with great earnestness the necessity of capitulating; alledging that it was impossible to hold out till the king's arrival, and that the sooner they submitted, they would the more easily obtain advantageous terms. This proposal was rejected with great disdain by the sieur de Annebourg and all the officers in the council. But the cowardly Belin, availing himself of that superior authority with which he was invested as lieutenant-governor of the province, capitulated, notwithstanding their remonstrances, on a condition to which the archduke readily agreed, that the garrison should march
out

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out with the honours of war. La Fere having surrendered on the day immediately preceding, the king had already set out for Ardres, and as his army had of late received a considerable augmentation, he entertained the most sanguine hopes of being able to raise the siege. When a messenger informed him of the surrender, he was inflamed with indignation, and ordered Belin to be tried for his life. At the importunity of his friends, he afterwards stopped the prosecution; but he banished him from court, and deprived him of his office of lieutenant-governor of the province^a.

Albert re-
turns to the
Netherlands.

HENRY was now in some perplexity with respect to his future conduct. He was extremely solicitous to recover as soon as possible the towns which he had lost; but as his finances were in great disorder at that time, and Picardy having been long the seat of war, was reduced to the most exhausted condition, he perceived that any enterprise so tedious as the siege of a fortified town, must be attended with insurmountable difficulties. He resolved therefore, in conformity to the opinion of his nobility, to advance towards the enemy, and to compel them, if possible, to give him battle. But the archduke, whose army was greatly diminished by putting garrisons into the conquered towns, had penetrated into his design; and being no less averse from an engagement than Henry was desirous for it, he left France without delay, and put his troops into quarters of cantonment in the province of Artois. The king being thus disappointed in his hopes of a decisive action, dismissed the greater part of his army, and leaving the marshal Biron with only five or six thousand men to check the excursions of the Spanish garrisons, he returned to Paris, where a great number of important affairs of state required his attention.

WHILE

^a D'Avila, lib. xv. Bentivoglio, &c. Thuānus, p. 116. lib. viii.

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WHILE the Spanish army was employed in prosecuting the war in France, no memorable event had happened in the Netherlands. This was not owing to any want of activity or vigour on the part of prince Maurice, but to the extreme weakness of his army, which the States, from a desire of saving their strength when they were not exposed to immediate danger, had reduced so low, that when all the garrisons were full, he could not lead into the field more than three thousand men. With the assistance of this little army, the garrisons of some of the frontier towns had made several bold incursions into Flanders and Brabant, and either plundered the country, or laid the inhabitants under contributions. The States of these provinces had ardently wished for the return of the archduke; and they now intreated him to employ his arms in reducing some of the places in their neighbourhood, from which they received so great annoyance. Albert, who did not intend, by returning so early to the Netherlands, to pass the remainder of the season without action, readily complied with their request; and, after deliberating with his council of war, undertook the siege of Hulst in Flanders.

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He besieges
Hulst in
Flanders.

MAURICE had, since his conquest of that place about five years before, made great additions to its fortifications. He had likewise formed the territory in which it stands into an island, by means of two large canals which were drawn round it; and, by building forts on these canals, and laying a part of the adjacent country under water, he had rendered the town almost inaccessible.

THIS at least was the opinion of some officers whom Albert had sent to reconnoitre it; but being ambitious to distinguish the first year of his administration, by performing some important service to the people committed to his care, and being excited

cited at the same time by de Rône and other adventurous spirits, whom no difficulties could deter from any enterprise, he persisted in his design, and proceeded immediately to put it in execution. In order to conceal it as long as possible from the enemy, he made a feint of attacking some of the towns in Brabant, and his measure was attended with the desired effect. Of five thousand men who were in garrison in Hulst, prince Maurice ordered two thousand to reinforce the garrisons of Gertrudenberg and Breda.

ALBERT immediately after turned suddenly towards Hulst, and having prepared a great number of small boats, he ordered two of his principal officers, de la Biche and la Barlotta, to transport a part of his forces across the inundation and canals. These men executed their commission with great secrecy and silence in the dead of the night, and encountered difficulties which required the most determined resolution to surmount. The tide did not rise so high as they expected, and they were often obliged to leave their boats, and push them forwards, while they stood up to their knees in mud. When, after much labour and difficulty, they had brought them to the side of the canal, they were discovered by the garrisons of some forts which had been built to obstruct their approach; but notwithstanding the incessant fire of these forts, they still continued to advance; and having launched their boats in the canal, they at last arrived on the other side, with the loss of only a small number of men. Early next morning count Solmes, the governor of Hulst, attacked them before they had time to entrench themselves. A bloody combat ensued, in which one regiment of the assailants was routed, and their commander killed. But the rest reflecting on their desperate situation from which it was impossible to escape, advanced with irresistible impetuosity, and after much bloodshed, compelled the garrison to take shelter in the town.

PRINCE

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PRINCE Maurice no sooner heard of what had happened, than he set out with all the forces which he could collect, hoping to be able to drive the Spaniards from that island, before their number was increased. But the archduke advanced with greater expedition, and prevented his approach. It was still practicable for Maurice to transport his forces to Hulst, by the canal which falls into the Hondt or Wester-Scheld. But before he could reach the island in that way, Albert had transported his whole army, and begun the operations of the siege. The only expedient which Maurice could now employ, was to introduce supplies into the town by the canal, the mouth of which was commanded by a strong fort, which he hoped the enemy would find impregnable. For this purpose he fixed his residence at Cruning in Zealand; and from that place, troops were frequently conveyed to the assistance of the besieged, notwithstanding the most strenuous endeavours of the Spanish army to intercept them.

THE siege and the defence were conducted with equal vigour, and the combatants on both sides gave innumerable proofs of the most heroic courage. The garrison sallied out almost every day, and made dreadful havock among the Spaniards. De Rône, to whom the chief conduct of the siege had been committed, was killed; and by this irreparable loss the assailants were greatly dismayed. The archduke, however, persisted in his enterprise; and although he had lost a much greater number of his troops than in both the sieges of Calais and Ardres, he continued his operations with unremitted ardour, till, besides demolishing all the outworks of the place, he had made a breach in the wall sufficient to admit of an assault.

THE garrison had thrown up a deep entrenchment within the breach, and as they were still as numerous as ever, through the seasonable supplies which

Hulst gave
up to the
Spaniards.

which prince Maurice from time to time had sent them, they had little reason for despair. But being seized with a sudden panic, they urged count Solmes, the governor, with the most earnest importunity, to capitulate ; and the count, dreading that, in the present temper of their minds, they would probably deliver the town without his consent, complied with their request.

19th August.

Victory of
M. Biron in
Artois.

ALBERT staid no longer in Hulst than was necessary to give orders for repairing the fortifications ; after which he returned to Brussels, amidst the joyful acclamations of the people ; who flattered themselves with hopes, that, under the government of a prince so successful in all his enterprises, an entire stop would soon be put to the incursions of the enemy, and internal security restored. But their joy on this account was of short duration. Marshal Biron, whom the French monarch had left behind him in Picardy, with a body of select troops, had hitherto been satisfied with acting on the defensive ; but soon after the surrender of Hulst, he began to make incursions into the province of Artois, and kept all the southern frontier of the Netherlands under perpetual alarms. The archduke sent the marquis of Varambon to oppose him ; and Varambon for some time obliged him to act with greater caution and circumspection than he had hitherto observed. But Biron having received intelligence that the marquis was on his march to offer battle, he advanced rapidly to meet him ; and, having placed the greater part of his troops in an ambush, he proceeded with the rest till he had reached the enemy. A fierce encounter ensued ; and Biron continued fighting and retreating, till he arrived at the place where his troops were posted. He then returned to the charge with his whole forces united ; and having taken Varambon prisoner, he put many of his troops to the sword, and compelled the rest to save themselves by flight ^b.

THE

^b Bentivoglio, lib. iii. Grotius.

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THE Prince of Chimai, now duke D'Arfchot, was appointed to succeed Varambon; and his endeavours to repress the incursions of the enemy, were attended with no better success than those of his predecessor. Biron triumphed over him through the superiority of his cavalry, and continued to exercise his depredations in the open parts of the country, till the approach of winter obliged him to retire.

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DURING the course of these transactions in the Netherlands and France, Philip sustained a calamity in Spain, which more than counterbalanced any advantage that could be expected from his late acquisitions. Almost every season since the discomfiture of his Armada in 1588, the English had undertaken some naval enterprise either against his dominions in Europe or in America. The affairs of the Netherlands and France had not hitherto left him leisure to take revenge for these insults; nor was his leisure greater at the present period, than it had been for some years past; but his patience was exhausted; and his acquisition of a sea-port, so commodiously situated as Calais, gave him a facility of annoying his enemy, which he had not possessed before. He resolved, notwithstanding his present embarrassments, to improve the advantage which this circumstance presented, and having begun to prepare a naval and military force, he intended to make a descent in Ireland; where he had long fomented the rebellious spirit of the catholic inhabitants, and had reason to believe that they would join his troops as soon as they should land.

Expedition
of the Eng-
lish against
Spain.

ELIZABETH was aware of the impending danger, and determined, if possible, to dissipate the storm before it should approach. For this purpose she fitted out a fleet of more than a hundred and fifty ships, having about eight thousand sol-

Earl of
Essex com-
mander in
chief.

diers and seven thousand mariners on board, and gave the command of the land forces to the earl of Essex, and that of the navy to lord Howard of Effingham. To this fleet the Dutch added twenty-four ships, with a proportional number of troops, under the command of Wardmont vice-admiral of Holland, and count Lewis of Nassau, cousin to prince Maurice.

WITH this powerful armament, Elizabeth intended to make an attack on Cadiz, where Philip's naval preparations were principally carried on. But its destination was carefully concealed. Sealed instructions were delivered to the several commanders, not to be opened till they should arrive at Cape St. Vincent's; and they were ordered, in their way thither, to keep at a distance from the coasts of Spain and Portugal, in order to prevent a discovery of their design.

THESE precautions served effectually the purpose which was intended. The whole fleet arrived on the 20th of June within sight of Cadiz, and found the Spaniards entirely unprepared for their defence. There was in the bay and harbour, besides thirty-six merchant ships richly laden, and ready to sail for America and the Indies, a fleet of about thirty ships of war, and a great number of transports loaded with naval stores, designed for the equipment of another fleet, which Philip was then fitting out at Lisbon. But there was no person in the place invested with the chief command, and no garrison in it sufficient for its defence.

Cadiz sacked
and plundered by the
English.

THE Spanish men of war, however, were quickly drawn up in the mouth of the bay, and they sustained the attack of an enemy so much superior to them, for several hours, till some of their largest ships were taken, others burnt, and the rest driven a-ground on the flats and shallows.

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IMMEDIATELY after this success, the earl of Essex landed his troops, and led them towards the town. A body of Spanish forces marched out to meet him; but being unable to withstand the impetuosity of the English, they soon turned their backs and fled. The English pursued, and entered the town along with them. The inhabitants, who were thrown into the most dreadful consternation, made a feeble resistance, and the castle surrendered before the English artillery had begun to fire. Essex discovered no less humanity after his victory, than bravery in acquiring it. The town indeed was given up to be plundered by the soldiers, but no cruelty or outrage, such as occurs so often in the history of the Netherlands, was permitted to be exercised. The booty was immense, and would have been much greater, if, while the commanders were treating with some of the principal merchants about a ransom for the merchants ships, the duke de Medina, who lay with some troops near the town, had not given orders for setting them on fire. It was computed that, in military and naval stores, merchant goods, and ships, the loss which Philip and his subjects sustained on this occasion, could not amount to less than twenty millions of ducats. Had the advice of the earl of Essex been followed, the English would have attempted to retain possession of the town, but Lord Howard and the other commanders regarded his proposal as chimerical. They believed that they had already fulfilled the queen's intentions: they dreaded the approach of a Spanish army, and therefore they made haste to put their plunder on board their ships, and immediately set sail for England.

THE affront which Philip received on this occasion, in having one of his capital towns sacked and plundered, constituted a considerable part of his calamity, as it lessened exceedingly the opinion entertained of his prudence, as well as of his internal

Destruction
of the Spanish fleet,
designed for
Ireland.

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ternal strength. This consideration, joined to an impatient desire of taking vengeance on Elizabeth, determined him, without regard to the approach of winter, to carry his plan of invading Ireland into immediate execution. By the arrival of his Plate fleet from America, he was enabled to equip in Lisbon and other places a hundred and twenty-eight ships of war and transports, with fourteen thousand troops on board, besides a great number of Irish catholics, and a prodigious quantity of military stores, and materials and instruments for building forts. This fleet, under the command of Don Martin de Padilla, set sail from Ferrol in the month of November; and if it had reached the destined port, the Spaniards, with the assistance of the Popish inhabitants, must have acquired so firm an establishment in Ireland, as would have cost the English many years, and much expence of labour and blood, to dispossess them.

ELIZABETH and her subjects, flushed with their success at Cadiz, were as secure as if the wound which they had lately inflicted on Philip's naval power had been mortal. They had no suspicion of his design, and were entirely ignorant of his preparations; but the good providence of Heaven interposed remarkably on this occasion, as it had done formerly, in their behalf. The Spanish fleet was overtaken by a storm off Cape Finisterre, and about forty ships, with their crews and stores, were lost. Padilla got back with difficulty to Ferrol; and henceforth all thoughts of the intended enterprise were laid aside^c.

The battle
of Turn-
hout.

THESE calamities were succeeded by another no less disastrous event, which happened in the Netherlands in the beginning of the year one thousand five hundred and ninety-seven. The fertile provinces

^c Grotius, lib. v. p. 269. Camden, p. 730. Carte, lib. xix.

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vinces of Brabant still lay exposed to the incursions of the confederates; and the inhabitants in order to save the country and villages from being sacked and plundered, had been obliged to submit to contributions, with which the united States were enabled to maintain the garrisons of Breda, Gertrudenburg, and other places. The archduke solicitous to deliver the people from these oppressions, had cantoned between four and five thousand horse and foot in the open town of Turnhout, which, on account of its neighbourhood to Breda, he judged to be the fittest situation for watching the motions of the enemy; and he had given the command of these forces to the count de Varras, brother to the marquis of Varambon.

PRINCE Maurice, having received intelligence that Varras had been intrusted with this command more on account of his rank and family^d, than his military skill, resolved to avail himself of this imprudence, into which the archduke had been betrayed. With great secrecy and expedition he drew together an army of five thousand foot and eight hundred horse, and set out from Gertrudenburg with a design to attack the Spaniards in their quarters of cantonment. Varras was informed of his intention only on the evening before, and was determined, in contradiction to the remonstrances of some of his officers, to retire to the town of Herentals. He accordingly sent off the baggage in the night, and began his march by day-break, without the sound either of drum or trumpet. His troops, almost all of whom were experienced veterans, were at first indignant at the thoughts of flying from an enemy whom they had often conquered; but the dread with which their general was actuated, soon diffused itself into every breast, and

^d Of the name of De Rie in Franche Compté.

and begot a conviction, that their preservation depended on the celerity of their retreat.

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MAURICE was only a few miles from Turnhout when his scouts informed him of the count's departure. He immediately sent Sir Francis Vere with a party of horse to scour the woods and hedges, and dispatched another party under count Hohenloe, to retard the Spaniards on their march till the infantry should arrive. Besides count Hohenloe and Sir Francis Vere, the prince had brought with him count Solmes, Sir Robert Sidney, governor of Flushing, and several others of his bravest and most experienced officers, by whom all his orders were executed with equal prudence and intrepidity. Count Hohenloe, at the head of four hundred horse, began the attack, and quickly routed the Spanish cavalry, who, being driven back upon the foot, threw them into disorder. At this crisis, Maurice himself and Sir Francis Vere came up, and having broke through the enemy's ranks, completed their confusion, and made dreadful havock among them, till the greatest part of them were either put to the sword or taken prisoners. Varras himself was killed, after having given proofs, that his misconduct had not proceeded from the want of personal bravery, but from the consciousness of his inexperience, and his solicitude for the preservation of his troops. Above two thousand were slain, and five hundred taken prisoners, while the victors lost only nine or ten.

It was in this engagement that a practice invented by Maurice was first introduced, of arming the cavalry with carbines instead of lances; and to this invention, which filled the enemy with amazement, Grotius ascribes the great facility with which they were overpowered; for the victory was gained

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gained entirely by the horse, and the infantry arrived only in time to divide the spoil.

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THE battle of Turnhout, through the great disparity between the numbers of the slain on the opposite sides, contributed more to exalt the *character* of Maurice than any of his former achievements. Nor was it military renown only which he acquired; he gave a striking proof likewise of his humanity in his treatment of the prisoners, whom he protected from all injury and violence with the utmost care, and many of them recovered through the tender attention which he bestowed. He sent the body of count Varras to the archduke; and Albert on that occasion assured him, that he would follow his generous example, and take effectual pains to prevent all cruelty and outrage in the further prosecution of the war^e.

THE loss which Albert sustained in the battle of Turnhout was soon afterwards compensated by his acquisition of Amiens, the capital of Picardy, and one of the strongest and most important towns in France. The citizens, who had been zealous partizans of the League, had lately submitted to the king, upon condition, that all their ancient privileges should be preserved, and in particular, that they should be allowed to guard the town themselves, and not to be obliged to admit a garrison of mercenary troops.

The surprise of
Amiens.

THE number of those who were enrolled for bearing arms was between fourteen and fifteen thousand; but neither their discipline nor their vigilance corresponded to the danger to which they were exposed from the neighbourhood of the Spaniards. They gave the same attention to their ordinary occupations as in the time of peace; only
a few

^e Grotius, lib. vi. ab initio. Thuanus, lib. cxviii. c. v. Bentivoglio, part. iii. lib. iii.

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a few were employed as centinels and guards, and even these performed their duty in the most negligent manner.

OF this negligence, Portocarrero, governor of Dourlens, a brave and enterprising officer, had received intelligence from one of the citizens^f, and he founded upon it a plan for taking the city by surprise. Having communicated this plan to the archduke, and obtained his approbation, he collected from the neighbouring garrisons about three thousand horse and foot, which he judged to be sufficient to carry it into execution^g. On the eleventh of March, he set out from Dourlens in the beginning of the night, and before sun-rise arrived at an hermitage about a quarter of a mile from Amiens. As soon as he perceived that the gate which lay next him was opened, he sent forward ten or twelve of the most resolute of his soldiers, with three officers, called d'Ognano la Croix, and Del Acro, disguised like the peasants of that country with long frocks, under which each of them had a brace of pistols and a sword concealed. Three of this party carried bags filled with nuts and apples. One of them drove a waggon loaded with large beams, and the rest followed slowly at a little distance. When the three first had passed the palisades and approached the gate, one of them fell down as by accident, and scattered the nuts and apples; and while the guards making game of the supposed peasant, were scrambling for them, the waggon was driven under the gate. There it stopped, and Del Acro, by pulling an iron pin, quickly disengaged the horses. He then fired a pistol, which was the

^f He had been banished on account of some crime.

^g They consisted of eleven thousand Spaniards, five hundred Burgundians and Germans, four hundred Irish, two hundred Walloons, and nine hundred horse.

the sign agreed upon, and he, and those who were with him, falling with great fury upon the guard, killed most of them, and made themselves masters of the gate. The centinel upon the top of the gate-way, perceiving what had passed, attempted to let down the portcullis : but it was suspended by the beams and the waggon ; and Portocarrero in the mean time brought forward his troops, and rushed into the town. The citizens, entirely unprepared for this sudden attack, were overwhelmed with astonishment and consternation. Their resistance was feeble and ill conducted ; and, after about a hundred of their number had fallen, they laid down their arms, and suffered the enemy to take possession of the town.

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THE news of this disaster affected the French monarch in the most sensible manner, and greatly allayed the joy which his late triumph over the League was calculated to excite. He considered that the Spaniards were, before this time, in possession of Calais, one of the principal sea ports in his dominions ; and that by their present conquest they had opened a passage from the Netherlands, by which they could make incursions to the gates of the capital. He was mortified by reflecting on the judgment which foreign nations must form of a prince, whose glory consisted chiefly in victories obtained over his own subjects ; and he dreaded that the malcontents in his kingdom might take advantage of the present calamity, and revive the flames of civil war. He had laboured for some time under bad health ; notwithstanding which, he broke off a course of medicine which had been prescribed to him, and set out immediately for Corbie on the Somme ^h, where, after consulting with the marshal Biron and some other principal officers, he resolved to postpone every other object of his

Henry's dis-
tress on
that occasi-
on.

^h About three leagues higher than Amiens.

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The siege of
Amiens.

his attention to the recovery of Amiens. He then ordered Biron to invest the town with such forces as could be drawn from the neighbouring garrisons, and returned to Paris to hasten the preparations necessary to insure success.

HENRY knew that the most vigorous exertion of his activity was requisite on this occasion, and he laboured with unceasing ardour, till, besides raising a numerous army, he had collected, from every quarter of his dominions, provisions and military stores proportioned to the difficulty of his intended enterprise. He concluded at this time a new alliance with the queen of England and the States of Holland; in consequence of which the former sent him four thousand troops, and the latter furnished him with a considerable sum of money, and engaged to make a powerful diversion of the Spanish forces in the Netherlands. Having sent off his troops to Amiens before him, as fast as they were raised, he found, on his return thither in the beginning of June, that the siege was already far advanced. Biron, prompted by his natural ardour, and piqued by a saying which had dropt from the king, that his affairs almost never prospered where he was not present, had exerted the most indefatigable vigilance and industry. He had rendered the blockade complete, by drawing strong lines of circumvallation round the town, and had begun to make his approaches to the walls. Henry approved highly of every thing that he had done, and in order to pacify his resentment, suffered him still to retain the chief command.

As the number of the troops was considerably augmented by those which the king had brought with him, and by the arrival of the English forces, the operations of the siege were carried on with redoubled ardour and alacrity; but the progress of the
assailants

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assailants was retarded greatly beyond what had been expected, by the invincible bravery and unremitted vigilance of the governor and garrison, who disputed every inch of ground with matchless intrepidity, and in the numberless sallies which they made, put some thousands of the besiegers to the sword.

By these sallies their own number was considerably diminished, and in one of them Portocarrero was killed. The defence however was still conducted with the same skill and spirit as before by the marquis de Montenegro, a Neapolitan of the family of Caraffa, and the king had reason to despair of being able to finish his enterprise before the arrival of the Spanish army from the Netherlands.

THE archduke was sensible that it was of great importance to Philip's interest to preserve possession of Amiens, whether he should enter into a treaty of peace with the French monarch, or prosecute the war; and he could not have exerted himself with greater activity in making the preparations necessary to raise the siege. But his levies, as well as all his other preparations, had been carried on slowly, through the extreme difficulty which he found in procuring money. The destruction of the fleet and stores at Cadiz had contributed not a little to increase that disorder which had so long prevailed in the king's finances. For several years Philip had been in the practice of borrowing large sums from the Italian and Flemish merchants, for which he had agreed to pay them an exorbitant interest, and had mortgaged certain branches of his revenue. The inconveniencies arising from thence had become intolerable, and he was determined to deliver himself from them at once, whatever should be the consequence. He had accordingly published an edict in the month of November

Albert attempts in vain to raise the siege.

ber of the preceding year, declaring all the contracts by which he had sequestered his revenue to be null and void; and alleging, as an excuse for this step, that, through the unfair advantages which had been taken of his distress, he had reason to dread, that unless some remedy were immediately applied, all his labours in behalf of Christendom and the true religion would be lost ⁱ.

PHILIP had as little reason to be satisfied with the prudence, as with the justice, of this expedient. His annual revenue, though now freed from all incumbrances, was insufficient to defray the enormous expence of the present war. It was still necessary for him, while the war continued, to borrow money; but no merchants either in Genoa or Antwerp, where it had been usually found, could be persuaded to advance it; and it was this cause chiefly which had so long retarded the archduke's preparations for the relief of Amiens.

Surrender of
Amiens.

THE blockade of that city had been formed in April, and it was the end of August before he could begin his march. At that time he set out with an army of more than five and twenty thousand men, and arrived within sight of the French camp about the middle of September. As his infantry was greatly superior to that of the enemy, he resolved to offer battle; and from the well-known temper of the French monarch, he doubted not that his challenge would be accepted. But Henry being distrustful of his infantry, the greatest part of which consisted of raw troops, readily complied with the advice of the duke de Mayenne, whom he had brought with him to the siege, and resolved to keep within his lines. The archduke advanced towards him, with his army drawn up in order of battle; but when he perceived that the king's resolution

ⁱ Grotius, lib. v.

resolution was unalterably fixed, that he was well prepared for his defence, and that his entrenchments were every where strongly fortified, he despaired of being able to effectuate his purpose, and returned to the Netherlands. In a few days after his retreat, the marquis de Montenegro, with the approbation of the archduke, consented to capitulate, and received from Henry the most honourable terms^k.

DURING the greatest part of the siege of Amiens, nothing memorable was transacted in the Netherlands; but as the archduke had, in order to fill up his army, almost drained the provinces of troops, he had no sooner begun his march, than prince Maurice, having assembled between twelve and thirteen thousand horse and foot, laid siege to Rhinberg, and in a few days obliged it to capitulate, though the garrison amounted to a thousand men. He next reduced the town of Meurs with the same facility. After which, having passed the Rhine, he made himself master of Grol, Brevort, and several other places, and then directed his march towards Lingen, the only fortified town which remained in possession of the Spaniards on the north side of the Rhine. Both the town and castle of Lingen were commanded by count Frederic of Heremberg, with a garrison of six or seven hundred men; and the count made, for some time, a vigorous and spirited defence. But the prince, after his batteries were ready to begin to play, having sent him a summons to surrender on honourable terms, with an intimation, that as this was the first summons, so he might be assured that it would be the last: Heremberg considered, that his perseverance must be attended with the destruction of the garrison, and therefore agreed to the terms proposed.

Progress of
the war in
the Netherlands

26th September.

End of August.

ALL

^k D'Avila, lib. xv. Bentivoglio, part. iii. lib. iv.

ALL these conquests were atchieved in less than three months. In those of Grol and Brevort, places situated in a marshy soil, Maurice encountered difficulties which required a vigorous exertion of his superior talents to surmount ; but as no peculiar or striking circumstances are recorded by the contemporary historians, I have not thought it necessary to descend to a particular detail. The acquisition of so many frontier towns was of great importance to the United Provinces, as they were thereby delivered from the incursions of the Spanish garrisons, by which the inhabitants of the adjacent country had been kept under perpetual alarms, and the States, deeply sensible of this advantage, testified their gratitude to prince Maurice, by conferring on him and on his posterity the rich seigniory of Lingen and its dependencies.

THESE transactions happened towards the end of the year one thousand five hundred and ninety-seven ; and the following was distinguished by a negociation which was set on foot for the establishment of peace between France and Spain. Neither Philip nor Henry had derived from the war those advantages, by the prospect of which they had been allured, and both of them had powerful motives for desiring that it might be speedily brought to a conclusion. Philip's eyes were now opened to the vanity of those flattering dreams of conquest by which he had been so long deluded. His acquisitions in France had cost him more than they were worth ; and besides the expence of making them, they were much more than counterbalanced by the losses which year after year he had suffered in the Netherlands. His finances, as has been already mentioned, were in extreme disorder ; his credit was ruined by the late violation of his faith ; his troops in many places of the Low Countries had mutinied again, on account of their want of pay ; and if the war should continue for another campaign, he thought

thought it not improbable that the greater part of them would refuse to march against the enemy. From his advanced age, and broken health, he had reason to believe that his death was not far distant, and he dreaded the fatal consequences which might arise from leaving his son, who was hardly arrived at the age of manhood, involved in war with a prince so powerful and enterprising as the king of France.

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PEACE was no less desirable to Henry than to Philip; those wounds under which his kingdom had bled for so many years, were still unclosed, and numberless distempers prevailed in almost every quarter, to which no effectual remedy could be applied during the continuance of the war.

WHILE, for these reasons, both princes were alike desirous of peace, neither of them would yield so far to his antagonist as to be the first to propose it. But the sovereign pontiff, as the father of all catholic princes, and the common friend of the two contending monarchs, acted the part of mediator between them; and Clement discovered on this occasion a degree of zeal and prudence, which justly entitled him to that high respect in which his character was held by his contemporaries. At his request, it was agreed by the two kings, that a congress should be held at Vervins, a town in Picardy, near the confines of Hainault. The presidents de Bellievre and Sillery, were appointed plenipotentiaries by Henry; and Ricardotto and Baptista Tassis, by Philip. Alexander de Medici, the cardinal legate, likewise repaired thither, and in the month of February the conferences were begun.

THESE conferences were matter of great anxiety to the States of Holland, as they could not doubt that a principal motive which had determined Philip to disengage himself from the war with France, was, that he might be at liberty to employ his whole strength

The pope mediates between the contending monarchs.
Opposition to peace by Elizabeth and the States.

strength against the confederated provinces. They were not without suspicions likewise, that the queen of England would embrace the present opportunity of delivering herself from the Spanish war, and were therefore much disquieted with the apprehensions of being left without an ally to support them. But they were soon delivered from their fears with regard to the conduct of Elizabeth, who being entirely convinced that the interest and safety of their infant republic were inseparable from her own, gave them fresh assurances of the continuance of her friendship.

THE French monarch no sooner agreed to the pope's proposal of a congress, than he sent an intimation of it to his allies, and expressed his desire, that, if possible, a general peace might be established, in which they, as well as himself, might be comprehended. But neither Elizabeth nor the States were disposed to listen to his advice. The latter were well assured that no consideration would persuade Philip to treat with them as a free state, and they were unalterably determined never to acknowledge him as their sovereign. Elizabeth, who had on different occasions experienced the great advantage which she derived from alliance with them, was no less solicitous than themselves that they should maintain their independence; and she believed, that while they maintained it, she should have no great reason to dread the power of Philip. She was concerned however at the prospect of losing so useful an ally as the king of France, and sent Sir Robert Cecil and Mr. Herbert, who were accompanied by Justin de Nassau and the celebrated Barnevelt, from the States, to remonstrate with Henry against the peace.

THESE able negociators left no argument untouched that could dissuade him from his purpose: they reminded him of the alliance into which he
had

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had lately entered with the queen and the States, and of the assistance which on different occasions they had afforded him. They represented the danger to which he exposed himself by treating with a prince who had given so many striking proofs of insincerity ; and they offered to furnish him with a large supply of forces, besides money, and a numerous fleet, for the recovery of Calais, and the farther prosecution of the war.

HENRY replied, that no alliance which he had formed with the queen or the States, could be reasonably interpreted as an obligation on him unnecessarily to prolong the war, which he was persuaded would soon prove the utter ruin of his kingdom. He expressed in strong terms his gratitude for the friendship which they had shewn him, and assured them, that no peace which he should conclude with Spain, would prevent him from making a suitable return. From the manner of life to which he had been so long inured, joined to the provocations which he had received from Philip, they might believe, that it was not an aversion to the war, but the necessity of peace that had determined him to embrace a measure so repugnant to the inclination of his friends. The disorders which prevailed in his dominions were such, that if the proper remedies were not applied, they would soon become incurable, and these remedies could not be applied in the time of war ; but peace, he hoped, would quickly restore his kingdom to its native strength and vigour ; when, instead of being a burden upon his allies, as he had hitherto been, he would be able, and they should find him willing, not only to repay with interest the obligations which they had laid him under, but to defend and protect them, and the rest of Europe, against the exorbitant ambition of the king of Spain.

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THIS

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THIS apology, delivered with that irresistible force of natural eloquence, by which Henry was eminently distinguished, made a strong impression upon the minds of the English and Dutch ambassadors; they could not doubt of the truth of what they had heard; and before their departure, they had the candour to acknowledge, that as the peace which he was about to conclude was necessary for France, so it might be found in the issue highly beneficial to the other European powers. Henry sent ambassadors to England and Holland to enforce what he had said on this occasion, and still continued as formerly on terms of cordial friendship both with Elizabeth and the States.

Conclusion
of the peace
on the 2d of
May.

THE treaty of peace was soon after brought to the desired conclusion¹. Several difficulties occurred during the course of the conferences, which were removed through the disinterested zeal and great authority of the pope and the cardinal legate, and at length, upon Henry's resigning his claim to Cambray, Philip consented, though with great reluctance, to give up Calais, Andres, Dourlens, and all the other towns in France, which he had acquired at the expence of so much blood and treasure^m.

Philip transfers the Netherlands to Isabella and Albert.

PHILIP had been the more solicitous to put an end to the war, on account of a scheme which he had conceived, after the disappointment of his views in France, of transferring the sovereignty of the Netherlands to his eldest daughter Isabella, whom he intended to give in marriage to the archduke. And to embrace this measure, he was prompted, partly by

¹ At Vervins.

^m Bentivoglio, part. iii. lib. iv. p. 464. Sully, lib. ix. D'Avila, towards the conclusion. Thuanus, lib. cxx. sect. i. and v; and Camden, p. 760, &c. Miniana, lib. x. cap. xii.

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by his affection for the Infanta, one of the most accomplished women of the age, and partly by his esteem for Albert, whom, of all the princes in Europe, he deemed the most worthy of so illustrious an alliance.

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BUT while his attachment to his daughter and her future husband made him desirous of procuring for them some sovereign establishment, he could not, without reluctance, resolve to separate from the body of his empire so rich a portion of his hereditary dominions. To the troops and money of the Netherlands, the late emperor and himself had been greatly indebted for most of their victories over their enemies in France and Germany; and it had been the Netherlands chiefly, which, by their situation in the heart of Europe, had rendered them formidable to the several European powers, and enabled them so long to maintain the tranquillity of their other dominions. The preservation indeed of these provinces had, for many years, proved a perpetual drain for the wealth of the Spanish monarchy; but it was doubtful whether, if they were disjoined from it, they would not be found as great a burden as ever, since it would still be incumbent on the king to support the archduke in his new sovereignty, against the attempts of his enemies in the revolted provinces.

His deliberations on this subject.

THESE considerations were urged with great warmth by the count de Fuentes, in order to dissuade Philip from the prosecution of his design. But some others of his counsellors, and particularly the count de Castel-Rodrigo, in whom he reposed the greatest confidence, were at no less pains to confirm him in it, by representing, that the separation proposed, instead of lessening, would serve to augment the strength and vigour of the Spanish monarchy.

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“THE Netherlands lay so remote from the seat of government, and the laws of that country, and the language, character, and manners of the people, were so extremely different from those of Spain, that it would be for ever found impracticable to preserve them in obedience. Their aversion to a foreign dominion, and especially that of Spain, was insurmountable; the absence and distance of the king had been the cause of that inveterate rebellion which had furnished employment to his armies for almost forty years, and no other effectual means could be devised either to reconcile the provinces which had already revolted, or to prevent the rest from imitating their example, but to give them a sovereign of their own, who by residing among them, might conciliate and secure their affections. It was true, that without the assistance of the queen of England, the rebels must long ere now have laid down their arms; but if with the feeble aid which they had received from a queen engrossed with domestic cares, and tottering on her throne, they had been able for so many years not only to defend themselves, but to carry on an offensive successful war, how much reason was there to dread the consequences that must follow, if the British crowns were united, as they would soon be, on the head of a prince in the vigour of life, who being free from the embarrassments of a disputed title, would have full leisure to give attention to foreign affairs. From jealousy of the king, the neighbouring princes would never cease to support the rebellion, and foment the discontents of his Flemish subjects; but if the Netherlands were disunited from the Spanish monarchy, and erected into a separate and independent state, the cause of that jealousy would be removed; it would become the interest of France and Britain, and the other neighbouring powers, to lend their assistance to extinguish the war; and even the

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the revolted provinces would, in order to secure internal tranquillity, chuse to return to their antient union with the Southern provinces."

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By these arguments, which coincided with Philip's inclination, he was confirmed in his design; and on the 6th of May he signed the deed of abdication; in which, after declaring his resolution to give the Infanta in marriage to the archduke, he resigned the sovereignty of the Netherlands, and of the county of Burgundy, to that princess, to be enjoyed conjunctly by her and her future husband, and after their decease, by the heirs of the marriage, whether male or female, according to the established rules of hereditary succession.

BUT it was provided, that in case this sovereignty should devolve to a female, she should marry either the king or the prince of Spain. That neither any prince nor princess descended from the Infanta, should marry without the consent of the king of Spain; and that in default of issue, the Netherlands should be re-united to the Spanish monarchy. By other articles, it was stipulated that the new sovereigns should prevent their subjects from trading to the Indies; that they should, before their admission, take an oath to permit the exercise of no other religion but the catholic, within their dominions; and in case they should fail in the execution of this, or any other article, it was declared that the sovereignty transferred should immediately return to the crown of Spain.

THIS deed was immediately transmitted to the archduke; and soon afterwards the States of the southern provinces agreed to accept of the archduke and the Infanta for their sovereigns, with the conditions which the deed contained; being well pleased to be delivered, as they

How received in the Netherlands.

they expected to be, from the yoke of Spain, which they had found so grievous and intolerable.

BUT although this event gave great satisfaction to the people subject to the Spanish government, it was not likely to produce any change in the sentiments, or conduct of their neighbours in the United Provinces. The new sovereigns, said the confederates, whom Philip has appointed, will be sovereigns in name only and appearance, but not in reality. They will be utterly unable to support themselves without the assistance of the Spanish arms. They will depend on Spain as much as any Spanish governor or regent; and the Spaniards will still continue to exercise, as formerly, an unlimited influence in the government. In the deed of abdication, the Netherlands are treated, not as a free and independent State, but as a fief of the Spanish monarchy; and from the advanced age of the Infanta^m, together with the conditions of the deed of abdication, it was evident that the present measure could be meant only as a temporary expedient, intended to amuse the people of the southern provinces, and not as a fixt and permanent establishment. But whatever was the king's intention in this measure, and whether the sovereignty now transferred, should or should not return to the crown of Spain, it was the unalterable resolution of the United Provinces to maintain their liberty, in opposition to whatever attempts might be made to deprive them of it by the king of Spain, or the archduke of Austriaⁿ.

ALBERT was in the mean time employed in preparing to set out for Madrid; but having been detained in the Low Countries much longer than he expected, by a new mutiny of his troops, he

^m Thirty-two.

ⁿ Van Meteren, Grotius, &c.

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he had begun his journey when he received intelligence of the death of the king.

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FOR more than two years this prince had been extremely afflicted with the gout; to which had been lately added, a hectic fever, and a dropy. Finding his strength so much decayed, that he could not expect to live above a few weeks, he ordered his attendants to transport him from Madrid to the Escorial; and when his physicians signified to him their apprehensions, that he would not be able to endure the fatigue: "but I am resolved, he answered, to accompany my funeral to my tomb." Upon his arrival at the Escorial, the gout returned with redoubled violence, both in his feet and hands; and soon afterwards, several imposthumes gathered in his knees and breast, which occasioned the most excruciating pain. He was in some measure relieved by laying the imposthumes open. But another more intolerable distress succeeded. The matter of his sores was of the most purulent and nauseous nature, and swarms of lice were engendered in it, from which no application and no care or pains could deliver him. In this dreadful condition, he lay in a supine posture, for more than fifty days; during which time he exhibited a striking display of patience, firmness of mind, and resignation to his fate. He gave proof of the sincerity of his religious profession, by practising with great zeal and assiduity, those superstitious observances, which the church of Rome prescribes, as the means of procuring acceptance with the Deity. He seemed inclined likewise to make atonement for some severities which he had exercised, and ordered several prisoners to be released, and their effects restored^o.

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Illness and
death of
Philip.

ABOUT

^o Among these was the wife of Antonio Perez.

ABOUT two days before his death, having sent for his son, and his daughter Isabella, he discoursed to them of the vanity of human greatness, delivered many salutary counsels for the administration of their dominions, and exhorted them with much earnestness to cultivate and maintain the catholic faith. When they had left him, he gave directions for his funeral; and ordered his coffin to be brought into his chamber, and placed within his view; soon after which his speech failed, and he expired on the 13th of September, in the seventy-second year of his age, and the forty-third of his reign^p.

His character.

No character was ever drawn by different historians in more opposite colours than that of Philip; and yet, considering the length and activity of his reign, there is none which it should seem would be more easy to ascertain. From the facts recorded in the preceding history, we cannot doubt that he possessed in an eminent degree, penetration, vigilance, and a capacity for government. His eyes were continually open upon every part of his extensive dominions. He entered into every branch of administration; watched over the conduct of his ministers with unwearied attention; and in his choice both of them and of his generals, discovered a considerable share of sagacity. He had at all times a composed and settled countenance, and never appeared to be either elated or depressed. His temper was the most imperious, and his looks and demeanour were haughty and severe; yet among his Spanish subjects, he was of easy access; listened patiently to their representations and complaints; and where his ambition and bigotry did not interfere, was generally willing to redress their grievances. When we have said thus much in his praise, we have said all that justice requires, or truth

^p Miniana, lib. x. cap. xiv. Thuanus, lib. cxx. sect. xiv.

truth permits. It is indeed impossible to suppose that he was insincere in his zeal for religion. But as his religion was of the most corrupt kind, it served to increase the natural depravity of his disposition; and not only allowed, but even prompted him to commit the most odious and shocking crimes. Although a prince in the bigoted age of Philip might be persuaded, that the interest of religion would be advanced by falsehood and persecution; yet it might be expected, that, in a virtuous prince, the sentiments of honour and humanity would, on some occasions, triumph over the dictates of superstition; but of this triumph, there occurs not a single instance in the reign of Philip; who, without hesitation, violated his most sacred obligations as often as religion afforded him a pretence; and under that pretence exercised for many years the most unrelenting cruelty, without reluctance or remorse. His ambition, which was exorbitant; his resentment, which was implacable; his arbitrary temper, which would submit to no controul; concurred with his bigoted zeal for the catholic religion, and carried the sanguinary spirit, which that religion was calculated to inspire, to a greater height in Philip, than it ever attained in any other prince of that, or of any former or succeeding age.

SOME historians have distinguished this prince by the title of Philip the prudent^r, and have represented him as the wisest, as well as the most religious prince, that ever filled the Spanish throne. But it is questionable, whether he be entitled to praise on account of his prudence, any more than on account of his religion. In the beginning of his reign, he discovered great caution in his military enterprises; and on some occasions, made even

^r Eldiscreto.

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even greater preparations than were necessary to insure success. But his ambition, his resentment, and his abhorrence of the protestants were too violent to suffer him to act conformably to the dictates of sound policy and prudence. He might have prevented the revolt of his Dutch and Flemish subjects, if, after the reformation in the Netherlands was suppressed by the dutcheis of Parma, he had left the reins of government in the hands of that wise princess, and had not sent so odious a tyrant as the duke of Alva to enslave them. He might, after the defeat of the prince of Orange, have rivetted the chains of slavery about their necks, and gradually accustomed them to the yoke; if by engaging in too many expensive enterprises, he had not exhausted his exchequer, and made it in some measure necessary for Alva to impose the taxes of the tenth and twentieth pennies for the maintenance of his troops. He might, through the great abilities of the duke of Parma, have again reduced the revolted provinces to obedience, if he had not conceived the wild ambition of subduing England, and acquiring the sovereignty of France. His armies in the latter part of his reign were never sufficiently numerous to execute the various enterprises which he undertook; yet they were much more numerous than he was able to support. Few years passed in which they did not mutiny for want of pay. And Philip suffered greater prejudice from the disorders and devastation which his own troops committed, than he ever received from the arms of his enemies. Against his attempts on England and France, his wisest counsellors remonstrated in the strongest terms. And prudence certainly required that, previously to any attack upon the dominions of others, he should have secured possession of his own. Yet so great was his illusion, that rather than delay the execution of those schemes which his resentment and ambition had suggested, he chose to run the

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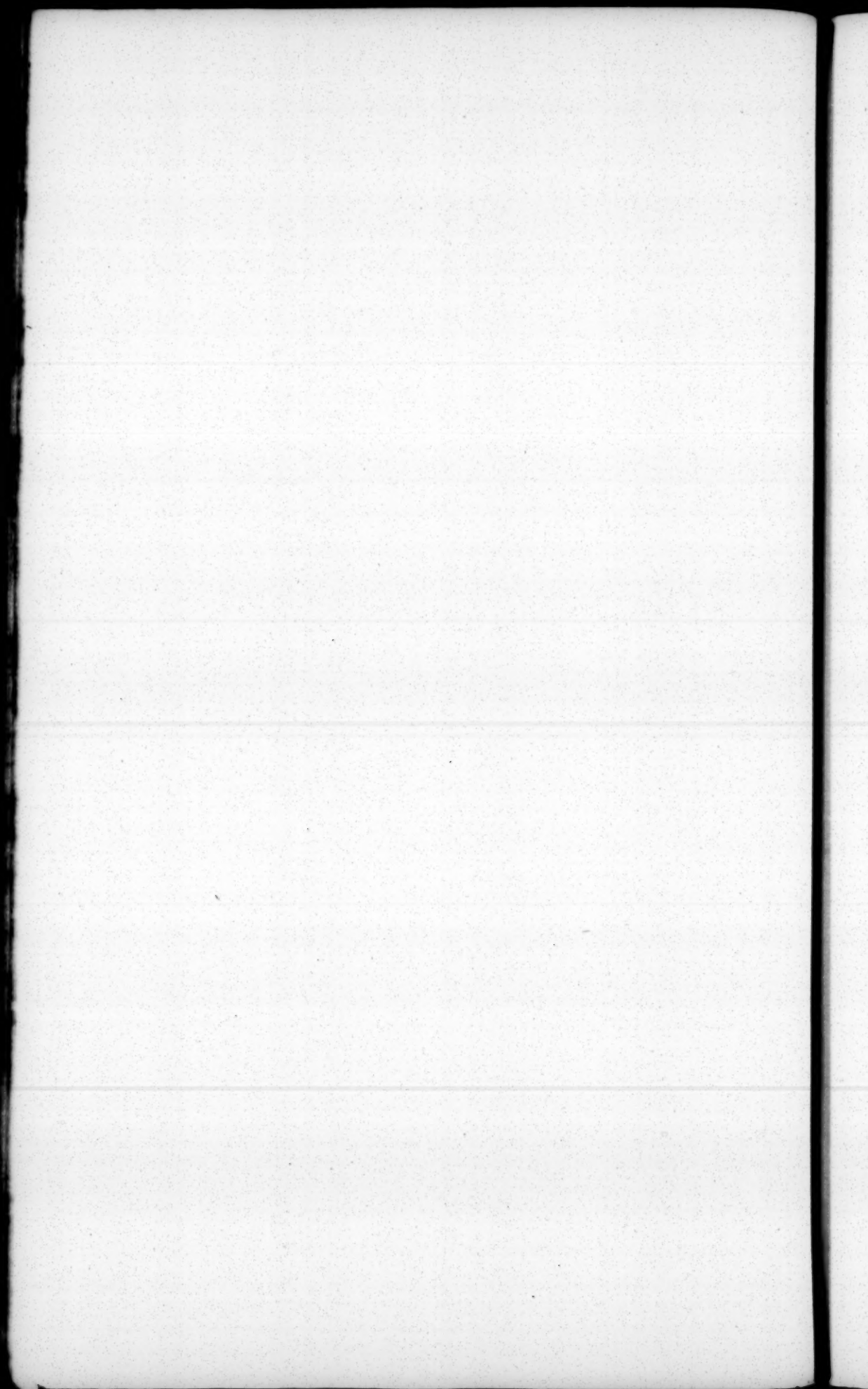
the risk of losing the fruits of all the victories which the duke of Parma had obtained ; and having left defenceless the provinces which had submitted to his authority, he thereby afforded an opportunity to the revolted provinces, of establishing their power, on so firm a foundation, as the whole strength of the Spanish monarchy, exerted against them for more than fifty years, was unable to overturn^s.

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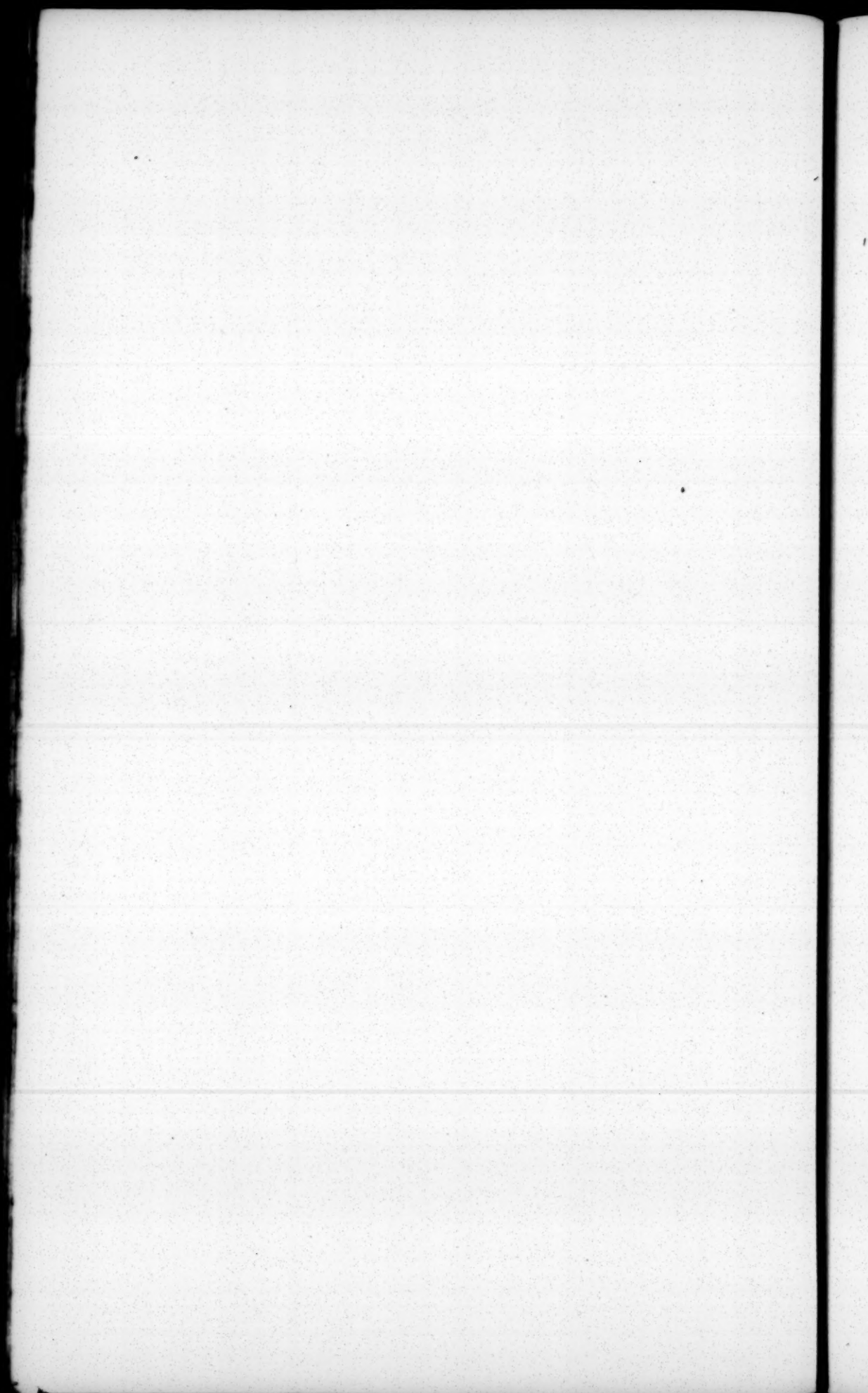
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^s If the reader incline to enter more particularly into the private life and character of Philip, than has been thought proper in the general history of his reign, he will meet with several interesting anecdotes, in the prince of Orange's Apology, of which an abstract is subjoined.

A P P E N .



A P P E N D I X;
CONTAINING
A N A B S T R A C T
OF THE
A P O L O G Y O R V I N D I C A T I O N
OF THE
P R I N C E O F O R A N G E,
A G A I N S T
P H I L I P ' s P R O S C R I P T I O N.



A P P E N D I X.

THE prince of Orange begins his Apology, which is addressed to the confederated States with observing, that being conscious of having devoted his life and fortune to the service of the Netherlands, it afforded him great joy to reflect upon the testimony given to his fidelity and zeal, in that barbarous Proscription which had been published against him by the king of Spain. "I have reason likewise," continued he, "to rejoice at the opportunity which is thus presented to me, to vindicate my conduct from those malignant imputations, which have been cast upon it by certain ignoble hirelings; and which are repeated and set forth in the blackest colours in this Proscription. For I am not accused at this time by any of those obscure libellers, to whom I have ever thought it beneath my dignity to reply; but by a great and powerful prince, who intends, through my sides, to wound, and if possible to destroy, the confederacy. I can with confidence appeal to you, who are well acquainted with my past life, whether it has ever been my practice, either to praise myself or to censure others. And I must likewise appeal to you and to the world, whether now, when I am accused of ingratitude, infidelity, and hypocrisy, compared to a Judas and a Cain, called a rebel, a traitor, a disturber of the public peace, and an enemy to mankind; and when both pecuniary and honorary rewards

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are promised to those who shall slay or murder me, whether after this, the duty which I owe to myself, and to you who have reposed in me such unlimited confidence, does not call upon me to say what I can consistently with truth, to prove the malice and falsehood of my accuser? If you know his representation of my conduct to be just, you will shut your ears against the defence which I am about to offer; but if you have known me from my youth to be more faithful, and chaste, and virtuous, than the author of this infamous Proscription, I shall expect that you will attend favourably to what I shall advance, and deliver judgment in vindication of my integrity and innocence.

“ THE first crime of which I am accused in this Proscription, is ingratitude; and a recital is made of favours bestowed on me by the king himself, and the emperor his father; to the latter of whom, it is said, I owed my succession to the late Prince of Orange; and to the former, my having been admitted into the order of the Golden Fleece, and appointed a counsellor of state, and governor of the provinces of Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, and Burgundy.

“ No man respects more than I do the memory of the emperor, and I reflect with much satisfaction on the many proofs of attachment which I received from him. But the necessity which I am laid under to vindicate my character, obliges me to observe, that of the sort of favours which are objected to me, I never received any from the emperor, but on the contrary suffered great loss and prejudice in his service. With respect to my succession to the inheritance bequeathed to me by my cousin, the late prince of Orange, it is impossible to conceive any ground for alleging that I was at all indebted for it to the emperor. My right to that

that inheritance was indisputable; nor was there ever any prince or private person, who pretended to call in question its validity. Would not the emperor have been justly accused of tyranny and injustice, if he had prevented me from enjoying it? And does my accuser reckon it an instance of goodness in a prince, merely not to defraud and oppress his faithful subjects?

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“ALL Europe knows what important services the emperor received from the prince my kinsman; who commanded his armies, extended his dominions, and died at his feet. Had the emperor employed his power to disappoint the last will of one who had served him with so much fidelity and success, would he not have involved his name in perpetual infamy? Besides, that even although he had inclined to act a part so unworthy of his character, yet of the most valuable part of that inheritance he could not have deprived me, as it lies within the territory of the king of France, on whom alone I depend for the secure possession of it. But even allowing that what is said of my obligations to the emperor were true, yet the king of Spain is surely not intitled to reproach me with it; who in contempt of all law and justice, has, to the utmost of his power, endeavoured to deprive me of the inheritance in question, and rendered ineffectual that kindness of the emperor, for my unmindfulness of which he accuses me of ingratitude.

“GRATITUDE, in the opinion of this prince, ought not to be confined to the person by whom favours have been bestowed, but ought to extend likewise to his descendants; and it is because I have opposed the son, whose father was my benefactor, that I am deemed ungrateful. Let him apply this golden rule to his own conduct, as he has applied it to mine; and he will then perceive

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which of us is guilty of ingratitude. Maximilian was the first of the family of Austria, who came into the Netherlands. And no person acquainted with history is ignorant of the important obligations which that emperor received from my kinsman count Egelbert of Nassau; by whom he was powerfully supported against Lewis the eleventh of France; by whom the people who had rebelled against him were subdued; and by whom likewise he recovered his liberty, of which the jealousy of the Flemings had deprived him. Need I mention what every body knows, of the service performed to the late emperor Charles, by count Henry of Nassau my uncle, who was in reality the person that prevailed with the electors to confer upon him the Imperial crown? Was it not by the bravery of René, prince of Orange, that the emperor subdued the dutchy of Guelderland; and by that of Philibert, that he gained possession of Lombardy and Naples, and the person of the pope, and the city and state of Rome? And will his son pretend to reproach the memory of these great men, by boasting of his father's kindness, in suffering justice to be done to their kinsman? Am I not authorised from the few facts which I have mentioned, to assert, that had it not been for the houses of Orange and Nassau, which I have the honour to represent, my defamer could not have put so many pompous titles, as are inserted in the beginning of his proscription?

“By what I have said, I would not be understood to disclaim every kind of obligation to the emperor. I shall for ever retain a grateful remembrance of the honour which he did me, when after having taken upon himself the inspection of my education, and kept me nine years about his person, he gave me the important charge of all his ordnance in the Netherlands; and in my absence, without any application made in my behalf, in contradiction

tradiction to the representations of his courtiers, and in preference to many officers of great experience, appointed me commander in chief of his army, at the age of twenty-one. I reflect with gratitude on that testimony of regard, with which he honoured me at the time of his resignation, when having sent for me from the camp, he gave me a public proof of his affection, by placing me next him, and leaning upon me, to support himself under the fatigue of that solemnity. I know likewise, that he meant to give me a further proof of his regard, when he imposed upon me the irksome task of carrying the Imperial crown to his brother Ferdinand. But will my enemies pretend to assert, either that I shewed myself unworthy of these honours, or that my interest and fortune were promoted by them? Did the troops, when I commanded them, suffer any repulse or damage? On the contrary, although the plague raged among them, and I had two of the ablest generals of the age, the duke de Nevers, and the admiral Coligny, for my opponents; I kept them at bay, and fortified the towns of Charlemont and Philipville, in spite of their most vigorous endeavours to prevent me. While the services which I performed corresponded to the trust reposed in me, I can affirm with truth, that honour was the only acquisition which I derived from the favour that was shewn me. From the chamber of accounts it will appear that I never received any pecuniary recompence for my services. I am able to prove by the most incontestible evidence, that my unavoidable expence as general, added to the expence of my embassy into Germany, and that which I incurred, when the king required me to receive and entertain the numerous foreign nobility, who crowded to congratulate him on his accession, amounted to no less than one million five hundred thousand florins. And to indemnify me for this expence, what return did I receive from the king, who now ac-

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cuses me of ingratitude? Having with the emperor's consent, begun to assert my claim to the lordship of Chatel Bellin, before the supreme court of justice at Mechlin; when the counsellors had registered their opinion, and on the day when they were to have pronounced sentence in my favour, this king, who had just sworn to govern us according to the laws, did, in violation of these laws, interpose his arbitrary power, and forbid the judges to proceed; nor since that time, have they been ever permitted to do me justice.

“ WHEN what I have said shall be considered, the governments which were bestowed on me, will not appear to be more than was due for the services which I have performed; nor more than an adequate compensation for that extraordinary expence, which these services had cost me. Had the king allowed me to remain in possession of these governments, he might have had some reason for reproaching me; although it was not in reality to him I was indebted for them, but to the emperor, by whom it was determined they should be conferred upon me, before his departure from the Netherlands. But since my accuser has laboured to expel me from them; since he has, to the utmost of his power, deprived me of my possessions, besides carrying off my son to Spain, in contempt of the privileges of this country, which he had sworn to preserve inviolate, because I would not lend myself a willing instrument of his oppression; after this, I say, is he intitled to accuse me of ingratitude?

“ NOR is there any better ground for his accusation, that I have violated the allegiance, which I owed him as my sovereign. Though I have rejected his authority, yet I have done nothing more than was done by his ancestor, Albert duke of Austria, the founder of his family, against my
ancestor,

ancestor, the emperor Adolphus of Nassau. And besides this, I should gladly know by what title my accuser possesses his Castilian dominions? Did not his predecessor Henry of Castile, a bastard, rise in rebellion against his brother Pedro, his lawful sovereign, whom he killed with his own hand? And is not Philip the lineal heir of that usurper? It may be said, that Pedro was a tyrant, and therefore justly dethroned and slain. And may not the same plea be offered in excuse for the part which I have acted? May it not be said with truth of Philip, that his conduct has been that of a cruel tyrant; and that the cruelties exercised by Pedro, were much less shocking and horrible, than those which have been perpetrated by the duke of Alva and his Associates? I must farther observe, that as king of Spain, I owe him no submission, but only as duke of Brabant. And as he is duke of that province, I, by reason of the baronies which I hold there, am one of the principal members of it. But he has forgotten the conditions on which he received this dukedom. He has forgotten the solemn oath which he took to preserve our privileges; and that it is an express article of the compact betwixt us, that if he fail in his engagements, our obligation to obey him as our sovereign shall cease. All Europe has witnessed his open contempt of these engagements. All Europe will bear me witness, when I say, that not a single privilege only, but every privilege of which we boasted, and which he had sworn to maintain, has been violated; and not in a single instance only, but in a thousand instances. In my own person, as I have already hinted, I have had ample experience of his lawless tyranny: my son, at an age when he was incapable of offending him, has been torn from me. All my estates and goods have been confiscated; and I myself declared a traitor and rebel, without any of those forms of trial which

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which the laws require ; and by whom ? By men of the lowest class vested with his authority, by pettifoggers, and others too mean to be employed as pages, by one who holds the rank, which I have long held in the Netherlands. I do not deny, that at his accession I took the customary oath of Allegiance ; but the tie on me to yield obedience, and that on him to afford protection, were mutual ; and it is a dictate of common sense, that in obligations of this sort, the failure of either party sets the other free from his engagements.

“ BUT even if I had not received any personal injury, I should have thought myself indispensably obliged to oppose the tyrannical measures which were pursued. For it is not the prince only who swears to maintain the fundamental laws. The same oath is required of the nobles, and of all who are admitted into public employments. By this oath I was strictly bound to do every thing in my power to rescue my fellow citizens from the oppressions under which they groaned, and, had I not done what my enemy complains of, I should have been justly chargeable with the crime, of which all the world knows that he has been guilty, a breach of the most sacred and solemn obligation.

“ TO this imputation, I know that his partisans are ready to reply, that although he swore at his accession to maintain our privileges, yet the pope had granted him a dispensation from his oath. I leave it to divines and others, better acquainted than I am with religious controversies, to determine whether this arrogance of the pope, in assuming power to set men free from the obligation of an oath, be not an impious encroachment on the prerogative of Heaven, and I leave it to them to determine, whether this pretension is not destructive of faith among men, and subversive of society. I speak
not

not therefore of the lawfulness of Philip's conduct, after having obtained this boasted dispensation, but of his folly in applying for it. The tie between him and his subjects was strictly mutual; and by procuring a dispensation for himself, he at the same time set me, and all his other subjects free from the engagements which we came under to yield him obedience. It is childish and trifling to say, that by means of the dispensation he is free, but that we who have not been dispensed with, are still as much bound as ever. For from the moment that he considers himself as disengaged, (by what means soever his obligation was dissolved) the condition on which we promised obedience being removed, it must be absurd to reproach us with infidelity.

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“ I COME now to that part of the proscription, in which I am accused of having been the author of all the disturbances that have happened. With such of you as are old enough to remember the rise of these disturbances, there will be no need to defend myself against so groundless an imputation; but for the sake of those who were too young at that time to form a judgment of what they saw, it is necessary I should give some account of those transactions, which are so grossly misrepresented in this infamous proscription.

“ No person acquainted with the conduct of my accuser in his other dominions, or with the cruelties exercised in Granada, Mexico, and Peru, will be at a loss to account for the calamities with which the people of the Low Countries have been overwhelmed. In the very beginning of his reign, his despotic temper was conspicuous. The emperor his father saw it with deep concern, and when the count de Bossut, and I, and several others were present, he exhorted him to treat his Flemish subjects with greater moderation; and foretold, that

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if the pride and arrogance of his Spanish counsellors were not restrained, the people of the Netherlands would ere long be excited to revolt. But this wholesome counsel had not the effect which the emperor intended. His son still consulted only with Spaniards ; he still fostered as much as ever his passion for arbitrary power ; and resolved, in contradiction to his interest, if rightly understood, as well as to his oath, to overturn our constitution. The condition annexed to your grant of the nine years supply, that the money should be disposed of by your own commissioners, excited in him and in his counsellors the most inveterate resentment. I have been present, when these counsellors who knew well their master's sentiments, advised him to the pursuit of measures, by which you were all to have been adjudged to death. But it was by accident I came to know that these bloody counsels had been adopted. From the French king's own mouth, when I resided at his court as an hostage, I learnt that a plan had been concerted with the duke of Alva, to extirpate from France and the Netherlands all who were suspected of being favourably inclined to the reformed religion. I concealed from the French monarch, my ignorance of the design ; and the indignation which it excited in me. By the intercession of the dutchess of Savoy, I obtained leave to return into the Netherlands, where (I deny it not, on the contrary I glory in it) I promoted with all my influence that earnest request, which the States preferred to the king for the removal of the Spanish troops.

“ I ACKNOWLEDGE, that amidst the numberless falsehoods with which this proscription is filled, there is truth in another part of the charge which is laid against me. I acknowledge, that after having remonstrated in vain to the dutchess of Parma, against the
cruel

cruel and arbitrary measures that were pursued; being prompted by my dread of a civil war, by my concern for the calamities of the people, and by a sense of duty arising from the oath which I had sworn to maintain their rights, I called together the principal nobility, and attempted to open their eyes to the impending danger.

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“ I ACKNOWLEDGE likewise, that I approved of the supplication, which was presented by the nobility, against the placarts and executions. I am far from being either ashamed, or sorry for the counsel which I gave. That supplication was not only the most moderate measure that could have been devised, but was strictly conformable to the constitution and practice of the Netherlands; and happy had it been for the king, as well as for the people, had he complied with the request which it contained.

“ WITH respect to that part of the proscription, in which my accuser reproaches me, on account of the favours which I have shewn to the protestants; I confess, that before I embraced the reformed religion, I never hated those who professed it. Nor will this appear surprising, when it is considered that my mind had been early tinged with its principles, and that my father who had established it in his dominions, lived and died in the profession of it. I confess, that even while, in consequence of my education at the emperor's court, I held the catholic persuasion, I always abhorred the barbarities which were exercised by the popish inquisitors. I confess, that at the time of the king's departure from Zealand, when he commanded me to put to death certain persons attached to the protestant faith, I refused to obey, and gave these persons private warning of the danger to which they were exposed.

exposed. I confess, that in the council of State, I made all the opposition in my power to the persecutions that were proposed; partly from motives of compassion or humanity, partly from my conviction of the absurdity of punishing men for opinions which they could not change, when they did not disturb the public tranquillity; and partly from a persuasion, that the violent remedies employed were calculated to disappoint the end in view. But while, for these reasons, I was from the beginning averse from persecution; you all know that I had no concern, either in the introduction of the reformed religion into the Netherlands, or in the rapid progress which it made during the government of the dutchess of Parma. You know, that at that time I possessed not the smallest influence with those, by whom it was introduced and propagated; and you likewise know, that with regard to those disorders, into which the protestants suffered their zeal to betray them, so far from giving them my countenance or approbation, I exerted my authority to restrain them; I punished the perpetrators with severity, and have, on account of the rigour which I exercised, been, by many among the protestants, most cruelly calumniated and defamed.

“ I HOPE to be excused on this occasion, for observing that there is one circumstance in the proscription, that gives me pleasure. Notwithstanding the malice and rancour, and contempt of truth which my accuser has discovered, there is one crime, often laid to the charge of the governors of provinces, of which he has not ventured to accuse me; I mean that of avarice, or the embezzlement of the public money. Of this despicable crime indeed, I have been accused by some unknown persons in certain defamatory writings that have been circulated. But from the silence observed on this head by my inveterate enemy, these libellers may see

see the folly, as well as falsehood of their insinuations. To you there can be no occasion to vindicate my conduct. I give thanks to God, that I learnt at an early period, of how much consequence it was for one who governs a free people, not only to preserve himself untainted, but even to keep himself free from the suspicion of corruption. And you know, that on this account I have constantly declined taking any charge of the public money ; and from the beginning of my administration, have transferred both the collection and distribution of it to others.

“ I AM accused in the proscription, of having practised to return into Holland, by undertaking to defend the people from the tax of the tenth penny, which, it is said, was imposed upon them by the duke of Alva, without the king's consent ; and I am accused likewise of having persecuted and expelled the catholics. If by practising, my accuser means that I solicited for liberty to return, there is as little truth in this, as in his other assertions. I myself was most earnestly solicited ; and I am ready to shew letters which I received, not only from the governors of towns, but from the citizens, intreating me to come and deliver them from the tyranny of the Spaniards. And in complying with these entreaties, what did I do, that my duty did not require from me ? I attempted to deliver from slavery, the provinces which had been committed to my care ; whose liberties I had sworn to maintain : and of the right to govern which, the king had no power, without the consent of the States to deprive me.

“ No part of this proscription gives me greater surprise, than that in which I am accused of persecution. It is impossible but even the Romanists themselves must bear witness to the falsehood of so injurious an imputation. No person in the Netherlands

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lands can be ignorant, that far from employing rigour, I have often argued and remonstrated against it, and have promoted lenity in the treatment of the catholics to the utmost of my power. Of this, even my accuser himself seems to make an indirect acknowledgment. I feigned, he says, that the persecution of the catholics displeased me. But how does he know that I feigned? Have not my actions been at all times open? Why does he not judge from *them* of my intention? Never had one person less ground for accusing another of any crime, than my accuser has to cast on me the imputation of hypocrisy. Did I, either before, or at the time when he conferred these obligations upon me, for which he has reproached me with ingratitude; did I ever offer the incense of flattery, either to himself or to the dutchess of Parma, or his tools and confidants in the council? On the contrary, did I not openly, and without disguise, condemn the measures which he had dictated, and which they pursued? Was it possible for me to speak more plainly than I did, or to give a clearer testimony of my aversion to his designs, than by desiring him, as I did frequently, to suffer me to resign my governments, because it was not in my power to yield him the obedience which he required? Such was my conduct before my departure into Germany; and since that time, is there a single step of my conduct that will admit of the interpretation of hypocrisy? Did I not openly solicit aid from the German princes to oppose him? Have I not raised armies against him; taken towns which he possessed; repulsed his forces, and expelled him utterly from at least two of the provinces, over which he tyrannized? Is there any thing in this that can be termed hypocrisy?

“BUT my accuser will not find it so easy to vindicate his own conduct from this odious imputation. Read my defence which I published some
years

years ago; and you will perceive to which of us belongs the appellation of hypocrite and deceiver. In that defence, there are copies of letters which I received from him, filled with professions of friendship and regard, at the very time, when, as appears from the sequel, he had doomed me to destruction.

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“ BUT why should I expect to be dealt with equitably, by one whose conscience allows him to affirm, that his minister the duke of Alva imposed the tax of the tenth-penny, and urged the levying of it with such inflexible obstinacy, without his authority or consent? Is it credible that one who knew this king's temper so well as Alva, and who had ever shewn the greatest solicitude to please him, would have presumed, by a measure so tyrannical and unprecedented, to run the risk of kindling a civil war? Or, if this wary Spaniard was in reality so rash and presumptuous, can it be believed by any person who considers the important consequences with which his rashness and presumption were attended, that the king would not, long ere this time, have disavowed him, and made him feel the weight of his displeasure? Was not Alva punished for ordering his son to marry his cousin, rather than another woman, whom he had debauched under a promise of marriage? Was not this old servant banished for this venial transgression, from his master's presence, and thrown into prison, from which he would never have been delivered, if one better qualified to tyrannise over the Portuguese could have been found in Spain? And what opinion must we form of a king, who for this private offence, could punish an ancient friend and servant with so much severity; while, notwithstanding the crime of treason, the most public and notorious, and productive of the most dreadful calamities to his faithful subjects, he not only suffered him to pass unpunished, but received him with open arms, and
loaded

loaded him with honours ? After this, will he still employ the language of a good king, and boast of his affection for his people ?”

IN a great part of what remains of this apology, the prince of Orange enters into a detail of the transactions recorded in the preceding history. I shall therefore pass over this, and set before the reader what relates to the reproach, which Philip casts on William's marriage with the daughter of the duke de Montpensier, who was the princess of Orange at the time of publishing the proscription.

“ My accuser,” continues he, “ is not satisfied with saying every thing that can blacken my character, and render it odious to the world ; but he has likewise attempted to taint the honour of my wife.” He says, “ that I have infamously married a religious woman, solemnly blessed by the hands of the bishop, in contradiction to the laws of Christianity, and of the Romish church, and that I did so whilst my marriage subsisted with another woman.” Though this assertion were strictly true, it would ill become this incestuous and adulterous king to accuse me. But you know that it is entirely without foundation. My marriage with my former wife, now dead, did not subsist, and the ground of her divorce was approved even by the doctors of the Roman church ; and by those illustrious princes to whom she was allied. My present wife was not, even by the rules of the popish church, a religious woman, in the sense meant by my accuser. The duke of Montpensier, my father-in-law, who is sincerely attached to the catholic communion, (not as cardinal Granvelle, and other Spanish ministers, from interest, but from principle and conviction) spared no pains to put the lawfulness of his daughter's marriage beyond doubt or controversy. He found it the clear opinion, not only

only of the principal persons in the Parliament of Paris, but of several bishops and doctors whom he consulted, that even if a promise of celibacy had been given by my wife, yet, in consideration of her youth, it would not have been binding, as it would have been contrary to the rules of the Gallican church, to the decrees of the high court of justice in France, and even to the ordinances of the councils of Trent, to which my adversary pays such unlimited submission. He likewise found that in reality no such promise was ever made; that sundry protestations had been taken to prevent any person from imagining that his daughter ever intended to take the vow; and that even in her absence, the most undeniable evidence of this had been produced.

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“ I SAID before, that although my marriage were not so unexceptionable as you see it is, even by the principles of the church of Rome, it would ill become my accuser to reproach me on account of it. He seems not to have remembered the common maxim, that whoever ventures to accuse another, ought to be well assured that he himself is innocent. And yet is not this king, who has endeavoured to stigmatise my lawful marriage with infamy, the husband of his own niece? It will be said by his partisans, that he previously obtained a dispensation from the Pope. But does not the voice of nature cry aloud against such an incestuous conjunction? And in order to make room for this marriage, is it not true, that he put to death his former wife, the mother of his children, the daughter and sister of the kings of France? I say not this, prompted by my resentment, rashly and at random. I assert, that in France there is evidence of the horrid deed of which I now accuse him.

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“IT was not a single murder that was perpetrated for the sake of this extraordinary marriage. His son too, his only son, was sacrificed, in order to furnish the pope with a pretext for so unusual a dispensation ; which was granted, in order to prevent the Spanish monarchy from being left without a male-heir. This was the true cause of the death of Don Carlos ; against whom some misdemeanours were alleged, but not a single crime sufficient to justify his condemnation, much less to vindicate a father for embruing his hands in the blood of his son. And if Don Carlos was in reality guilty of crimes deserving death, ought not an appeal to have been made to us, his future subjects ? Did the right of judging, and pronouncing sentence of death against the heir of such extensive dominions, belong to Spanish friars and inquisitors, the obsequious slaves of the father’s tyranny ?

“BUT perhaps this good king made conscience of leaving for his heir a prince, whom he knew to be born in unlawful wedlock. For Philip’s marriage with the mother of Don Carlos was not less contrary to the laws of God and man, than that other of which I have already spoken. At the very time when he espoused the princess of Portugal, the mother of Carlos, his marriage subsisted with Isabella Oforis, by whom he had two sons, Pedro and Bernardino ; a marriage brought about by Ruy Gomez de Silva, prince of Evoli, to which that nobleman was indebted for his power and greatness. And besides, is it not well known that this king lived in habitual adultery with another woman, the lady Euphrasia ? Did he not compel the prince of Ascoli to take that lady for his wife, when she was big with child by himself ? And while it has been affirmed with certainty, that that unhappy man was taken off by poison, do not even the Spanish courtiers ascribe his death
to

to the grief which he conceived from the affront to which he was obliged to submit, and the cruel necessity imposed on him, of acknowledging for his heir the adulterous bastard of another? Such, and so chaste has been the conduct of this king, who has the assurance to calumniate my lawful marriage as a violation of the sacred laws of chastity.

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BUT I shall hasten to conclude this apology, after offering some remarks concerning the nature of the sentence that has been pronounced against me. It is in this part of the edict of proscription, that the compiler, whether the king himself, or some ignoble instrument of his tyranny, has employed all the thunder and lightning of his eloquence. But I thank God, it intimidates me no more, than the anathemas of Clement VII. intimidated my kinsman prince Philibert, when he besieged and took the pontiff prisoner in his castle of St. Angelo. After the proofs which I have given, that I fear not all the power which my adversary is possessed of; and after contending for so many years against his best generals, with numerous armies under their command, it was weak in him to expect to frighten me with the high sounding terms of this proscription. I have less reason now than formerly to dread the attempts of those abandoned wretches, whom he has endeavoured to instigate against me. For I am not ignorant, that before this time he has bargained with prisoners, and other murderers, to deprive me of my life. He has now given me a public warning of his bloody design. And with the divine assistance, and the vigilance of my friends, I trust, that notwithstanding his diabolical machinations, my life shall be preserved so long as the prosperity and interest of this people, to whose service I have devoted it, shall require.

“ My confidence on this head is greatly augmented by reflecting upon the indignation, which I cannot doubt will be generally excited by that extraordinary method of proceeding against me, which my adversary has adopted. For there is not, I am persuaded, a nation or prince in Europe, by whom it will not be thought dishonourable and barbarous, thus publicly to authorise and encourage murder ; except the Spaniards, and their king, who have been long estranged from every sentiment of honour and humanity. In having recourse to private assassination against a declared and open enemy, does not this mighty monarch confess his despair of being able to subdue me by force of arms ? Does he not give a testimony in my behalf, and discover that he dreads the efforts which I may make against him ? Is it not weak and mean, to make publicly so pusillanimous an acknowledgment ? But the weakness and meanness of this conduct is not greater than the absurdity of his choice of the rewards, which he holds forth to those who shall execute his bloody purpose. For it is not money only that he offers them, but nobility and honour ; as if a regard to honour could influence a man capable of perpetrating a deed, held in universal reproach and detestation. And if any person already possessed of nobility were to pollute himself by so foul an action, would not his nobility be from that moment annihilated ? Would not all society and connection with him be held dishonourable ?

“ EVEN my adversary himself seems to have been in some measure sensible of the truth of this, and therefore he addresses himself more particularly to criminals and malefactors, as those who are most likely to comply with his request. “ And in order, says he, that his destruction may be the more effectually and speedily accomplished, we, desirous of punishing vice, and rewarding virtue,
promise

promise on the word of a king, and as the minister of God, that if any person shall be found possessed of courage, and public spirit sufficient to animate him to the execution of this decree, and to free us from the aforesaid pest of society, we shall order to be delivered to him, either in land or money as he shall incline, the sum of twenty-five thousand crowns; and if he shall have committed any crime, however enormous, we promise to grant him our royal pardon, and if he be not already noble, we hereby confer nobility upon him, and likewise on all those who shall aid and assist him." Is not this in plain terms, calling on every desperate wretch, every outcast from society, to assist him in the execution of his design? No crime, however enormous, but shall be pardoned; no criminal, however detestable, but shall be crowned with honour. Does this king deserve the title which he assumes, of a minister of God, who thus confounds the distinction between vice and virtue; and thus publicly avows his willingness to bestow the highest rewards and honours upon men, defiled with the most abominable crimes? Have I not ground to rejoice in being persecuted by one whose conscience allows him to have recourse to such unhallowed means? And is not such depravity of sentiment in my accuser, a testimony in behalf of my integrity?

I HAVE now said all that seems necessary to vindicate my character from those false aspersions which are thrown out upon it in this proscription. Many things which I might have said, I have purposely omitted. Had I descended to a particular account of the cruelty, accompanied with a contempt of the most sacred obligations, which has been exercised by my accuser over this unhappy people, I should never have come to a conclusion. But with you there can be no occasion for giving a more particular detail. You have been specta-

tors of the horrid scene; and have borne your share of those oppressions, which would fall to be described.

“ BUT before I conclude, I must intreat you to reflect seriously upon the means to which our enemy finds it necessary to have recourse, in order to accomplish his designs. This infamous proscription, joined to the pains which he and his ministers continually employ to create division among the provinces, shews clearly that he now despairs of enslaving us by force of arms, while we remain united.

“ IT is indeed against me chiefly, at this time, that his designs are directed. “ Were I removed, he says, either by death or banishment, tranquillity would be restored.” You will easily conceive what tranquillity he means, if you call to mind your condition, before I returned into the Netherlands, when you groaned under the tyranny of the duke of Alva. Would to heaven that by my banishment or death you could be delivered from your calamities! My enemy should not in that case find it necessary to employ prisoners and assassins to destroy me. You all know how often I have exposed myself to danger in your defence. I leave it to you, to whom alone it belongs, to determine whether my life and presence be repugnant or conducive to the interest of the provinces. To you only, and not to the king of Spain, I am accountable for my conduct. You have full authority (and I pledge myself to submit to it) to dispose, as you shall incline, either of my person, or of my life. Interpose that authority with which I acknowledge you to be invested, and give orders either for my departure from among you, or for my death; if you judge either the one or the other for the general good. But if, on the contrary, my past conduct has convinced you, as I trust it has, of the

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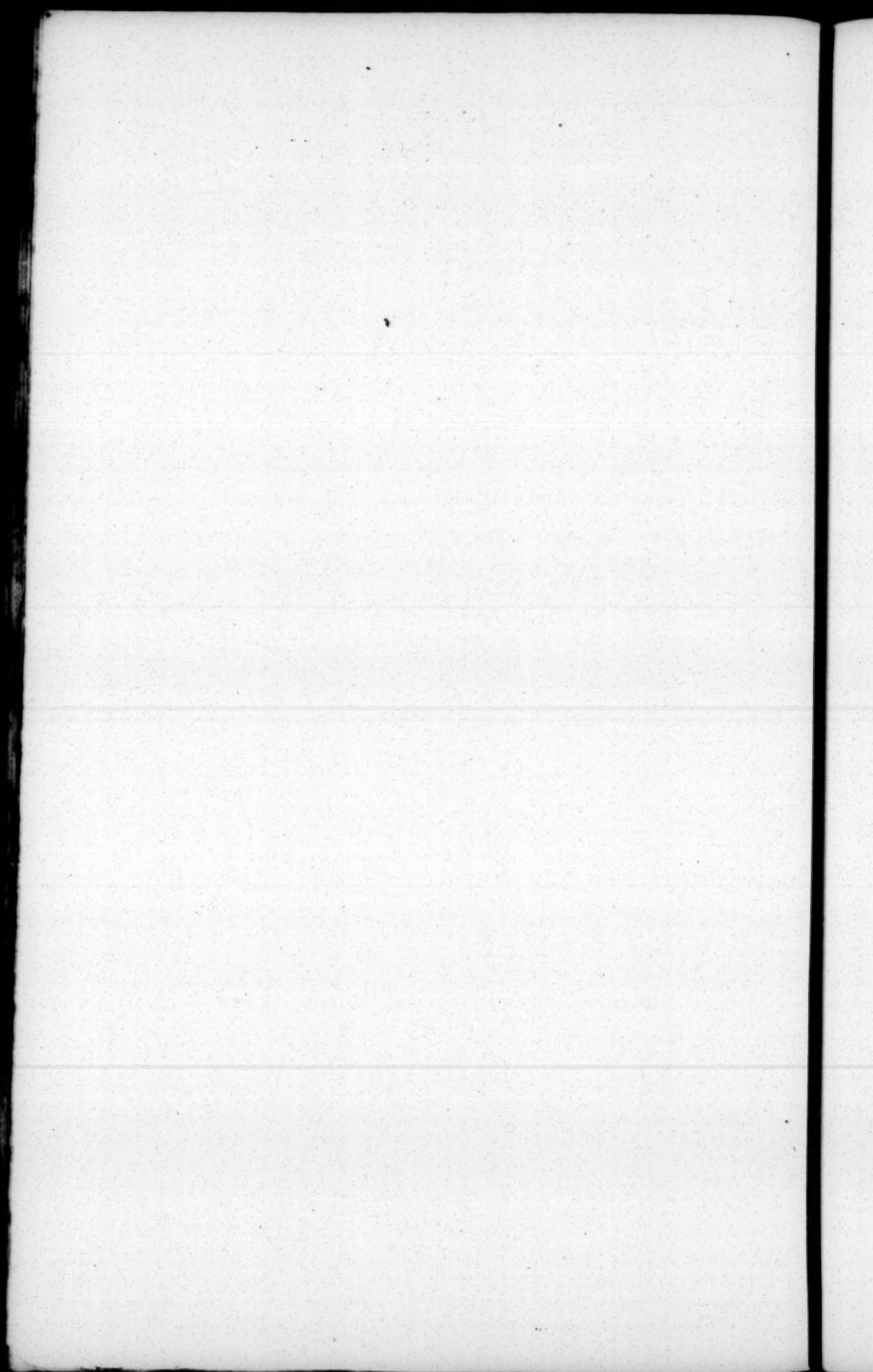
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sincerity of my zeal and attachment, or if my long experience gives you confidence in my ability for conducting your affairs; I shall still continue to employ in your service, the talents which I possess, hoping that you will listen to the earnest exhortations which I have given you, to maintain harmony and concord in the state; and exert yourselves strenuously for the defence of this people, whom you have undertaken to protect; depending on the favour of the Almighty, that your endeavours for this end shall be attended with success."

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